

122 A 11

GLASSE AND SALVE FOR PROFESSORS Held to them.

By *William Voile* Minister of the Gospel.

James 1. 23, 24.

Any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straight way forgetteth what manner of man he was.

Revel. 3. 18.

Anoint thine Eyes with Eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

London, Printed for the Author, 1668.

CLASS

SALE

PROFESSORS

THE UNIVERSITY OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF

17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

H
com
them
sider
succe
red,
ublic
The
can
the li
exbo
but a
their
or re
Emi
know
chast
and
selve
cordi
cies o
enem
lous
Mie
from
1 Co
sailb
able
high
P
can

WILLIAM VOILE, A Servant of *Jesus Christ* in the Ministry of his Gospel, To all those of His Majesties Subjects that are called *Professors*, because they do profess (or practice) the *Protestants* Religion in a way more or less differing from the most common way, *Greeting*.

Beloved, it is now above forty nine years, since I was first a Preacher: since which time I have had so much, and such communion with the Professors of England and Wales, that I have attained much knowledge of Professors of most wayes in the Protestant Religion, and committed very many of my Observations to writing, especially the faults of them I have preached to, Professors, and heard others preach to them, and considered my own preaching and theirs, (what and how we have preached) and the success of our preaching. I have hearkened, and heard, and seen, and considered, who have preached aright, or made such use as ought to be made of that which hath been preached, and who hath repented and reformed, Jer. 8. 6. The reason whereof was this: I looked on the sins of Professors, as the procuring cause of their Troubles and Afflictions, and the greatest let of their Prayers for the liberty and Peace of Professors, and judged it a work fit for Preachers, to exhort Professors, not only, to humble themselves for their sins and failings, but also to strive and give diligence to cease from them, and to reform their wayes according to the word of God universally, without any exception or reservation. Which Truths I did also publish about two years since in an Eminent City, and have now by this honest Treatise endeavoured to make them known to others, and to shew you the ends and meaning of our heavenly Father in chastising you and me; to the end that ye may bear his Rods with understanding, and [him] who hath appointed them, (Mic. 6. 9.) and so as to submit your selves to him unreservedly (Jam. 4. 7.) to do and to leave undone altogether according to the Message which he hath sent you. And I beseech you all, by the mercies of God, let me obtain these requests of you. 1. Let me not be accounted an enemy to (any of) you, because I judge rightly of the greatest and most perilous of your enemies, your sins, and because I tell you of them; (for I do this to warn you of your danger, that you may judge your selves, and abstain from your sins, that ye may not be condemned with the World, Gal. 4. 16. 1 Cor. 11. 32.) 2. Strive in your prayers unto God for me, as one of your faithful friends, that, whilst I live on earth, I may be thoroughly willing and well able to do *Jesus Christ* and his Church service. 3. For the honour of the most high God, and the credit of his Gospel, and your own good, and the good of your Country, (Deut. 3. 29.) and of all Christs people, use the most effectual means you can, to persuade and induce every one himself, and all those to whom I have

directed this Epistle, to peruse this Treatise all over, and that seriously, and in the fear of God, and in much Humility, consulting with God and one with another about it, and praying fervently unto God, to give them a right understanding and a sound judgment; and resolving with a strong resolution (by Gods assistance) to do the will of God unreservedly. For this is the way to know of the Doctrine, whether it be of God or not, John 7. 17.

Beloved, I shall hope, that this work of mine, will (in some measure) help to open the eyes of the blind, and to cause the lame to walk, and the dumb to speak, and that, by my means (among other good works) very worthy men that are dead, shall speak unto you words very good to the use of edifying, which no man else will help them to speak unto you. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

GLASSE and SALVE FOR PROFESSORS.

Beloved Brethren and Sisters, rich and poor, hearken. Although the great God, in whose hands the times of all the Creatures are, *Psal. 31. 15. changeeth not, Mal. 3. 6. but is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever, Heb. 13. 8.* and albeit, *the darkness and the light be both alike to him, Ps. 139. 12.* yet the Creatures are changeable and actually changed, and their times are not all of one and the same sort. To the posterity of *Adam*, there is a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to laugh, and a time to mourn; (times of health, and times of sickness;) a time to live, and a time to die, *Ecc. 3. 1. &c.* Men and Women have good dayes, *1 Pet. 3. 10.* and evil dayes, *Eph. 5. 16.* and perillous times, *2 Tim. 3. 1. &c.* and, in *Solomons* language, *Ecc. 7. 13, 14. dayes of Prosperity, and dayes of Adversity*: Where he countelleth us, *ver. 14. To consider the work of God,* D. We ought to consider the works of God, of all sorts; and *v. 13. In the day of Prosperity, to be joyfull,* D. Times of Prosperity do in a special manner call for joy; and *in the day of adversity, to consider,* D. meaning, that, *As we ought to consider in times of all sorts, so especially in times of Adversity.* And such is this time to this Nation, especially to them who are called *Phanaticks*; and among them to us who have been *Ministers of the Gospel.*

Quest. And what ought we to consider in this time of Adversity? 2

Answer. These nine things. 1. The severals whereof our Adversity consisteth, *Marg. 3.* 2. That no part of it came upon us without God, *Mat. 10. 29, 30, 31. but every part of it, according to his providence and the counsel of his will, Eph. 1. 11. Marg. 11.* 3. That our heavenly Father in giving way to men, &c. hath not dealt unjustly with us, nor done us any wrong, *Marg. 16.* 4. That in afflicting us he hath done wisely, and therefore afflicted us for fit ends, *Marg. 18.* 5. We must consider, Why and for what ends he hath afflicted us? *Marg. 18.* These five things

we ought to consider, that we may not despise his chastening, *Prov.* 2. 11, 12. nor harbour hard thoughts of him: and that we may discern what course to take for the bettering of our Estate. 6. We ought to consider, what means we have used to better it, or to prevail with God to better it, *Marg.* 90. 7. We must consider the success and issue of those means, how far we have prevailed by using them, and how far not, *Marg.* 92. 8. If our Estate hath not thereupon been changed fully, according to our desires and requests; then we are to consider, why God hath not heard them to the full? what hath hindered them, and made them so far forth ineffectual? especially, whether iniquities and sins have hindered them? and, if sins, whose sins, and which of their sins? *Eccl.* 5. 9. 1, 2. *Marg.* 93. All which things being considered. 9. And lastly, it concerns us to open our eyes, to see, and to consider what course it concerns us to take hereafter, and when? what to do, what to amend, and how? what to cease from, &c. *Marg.* 94.

Now as to the first of these, I have known when our Trading was ³ not (altogether) so dead, and so much hindered; when many of the poorer sort had more work, and many of the richer sort more money; when many were better able to maintain their Children, and to bind them Apprentices, and to furnish them with moneys for Trading, and to make them Scholars, when many were more able to pay their Rents and other debts; when Houses and Lands were set and sold at higher Rates without wronging the Takers and Buyers; when the total of our publick Taxes and payments was not (altogether) so great as now (to some) it seems to be, &c. When so many of this Nation were not taken away by the Pestilence, and by and in Sea-actions impoverished, maimed, wounded, killed, and deprived of their Husbands, Fathers, Children, and Apprentices; and when so many Churches, and publick Houses, and so many private Houses have not been burnt, and so much (worldly) Riches destroyed in London in so few days as of late in 1666. have been. But all these and some other evils are common to us with others, *Prov.* 28. 12, 18.

4. 2. Some of us have been deprived (and do continue destituted) of our places of credit and profit, and consequently of our Livelihood and maintenance, and are forbidden to teach or table Scholars; (although (peradventure) we might in that way be somewhat beneficial to the Church and Common-wealth.)

3. Some of us are separated from London, and all other Cities, and many Towns which are not Cities &c.

5. 4. No private Meetings, &c. under the pain of Banishment into Foreign Plantations, &c.

5. If we Administer either of the Sacraments, we must pay more than some of us *be very well able to spare, &c.*

6. The fellowship which we have had together in the Gospel, must be broken off, and the spiritual benefits which we might have gotten by conversing together lost, *Beside the losses of Luke the 8. 2, 3.*

7. This is a time of extraordinary Temptations to us and others. Many professors, especially Preachers, are tempted to sin against their Consciences, to get places of worldly profit, and to bear sinfully with the sins of Professors, lest they should lose the help of their Purges, others are tempted to avenge themselves, to oppress, to use cruelty.

8. I think, the *last* twenty years and upwards are part of the perilous times, whereof St. Paul prophecyeth, in *2 Tim. 3.* in the first 7 Verses, beginning with, *This know also*, as speaking of that which is very fit to be known, and to be considered very seriously. *This know also* (saith he) *that in the last dayes perillous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud. Having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof, which words I do understand of many of those who have gotten the name of Professors, as well as of others,* and that, because so many do walk and behave themselves, as if Godliness were of no great power to better a mans conversation.

9. If *none* of the late Decrees, and the Outings and Restraints do (in ⁶ any measure, directly nor indirectly) tend unto the decay of that which the Book of Common-Prayer calls Gods true Religion and vertue; yet before the time of the Interruption there were, who, under the pretence of reconciling two Religions, sought to undermine and destroy the better of the twain: and in the time of the Interruption, Corrupters and new Lights, who did hatch Cockatrice Eggs, Ranters, (Familists) Quakers: and part of that evil work was done (I doubt not) in Policy of purpose to undermine and destroy Truths. In a word, there have been these last thirty years and more, and still (I believe) are some, whose working (*partly in the dark*) hath been and is such, that as the Psalmist saith, *Psal. 119. 126. It is time for thee Lord to work, for they have made void God's Law:* So may we well say, *It is time for the Lords Servants to work for, and with God:* for there are some that would gladly destroy the true Gospel: So that, if the plot to burn and Massacre, be but a Dream, or meer imagination (as I would have Charity not to be suspicious, and to think evil, *1 Cor. 13. 5, 7. without some just cause:*) yet there is cause enough, why Professors, yea all Protestants and Anti-papists should pull their eyes out of their pockets, and carry them

in the fore-part of their heads; that they may see where to place their feet, (how to order their goings) yea (if they can) to be altogether as *wise as Serpents*, *Mat. 10. 16.* [yet not to tread in the steps of *D. Parry*, who *against all Reason*, did *conspire Treason foul and base.*]

7 And so much be spoken of the first particular. (A Digression.) Before I speak of the second, give me leave (by the way) to shew *what good use ye who are Professors, may make of some things before mentioned, in respect of your spiritual Estate*; as *Lot* did (or might have done) of the vexing of his soul with the unlawful deeds and speeches of his Neighbours, the *Sodomites*, (2 *Pet. 2. 7, 8.*) for thereby he might discern his soul to be a *righteous soul*: and so may ye discern in some measure the temper and disposition of your spirits, and consequently your spiritual estate, by the movings or stillness of your hearts in this time of such evils; hearken therefore I beseech you, to that which I shall say unto you; especially, all those of you who have not hitherto at any time duly tried your spiritual estate, *which*, I fear, hath been the folly of many Christians.

1. Let your Consciences tell you, *how ye are affected with those things which have of late befallen so many godly and profitable Ministers of Jesu Christ*, with the loss of their maintenance, and their now very low condition. Are ye really grieved at it? If ye be not, ye are but mean Professors, *Amos 6. 6.*

2. *How are ye affected with their loss of so many opportunities*, of drawing so many godless persons out of the Kingdom of darkness, into the Kingdom of grace, unto Gods honour, and the lost sheeps everlasting salvation? Is it nothing to you that their Parishes, and the Nation, and our Lord *Jesu Christ*, have so far lost their Ministry? *Jude 5.*

23. Why Brethren? our Saviour (and the same mind ought to be in you, which was in him, *Ph. 2. 5. 1 John 3. 3.*) he had compassion on those who were scattered abroad, as *sheep having no shepherd*; and thereupon said unto his Disciples, *The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few*: Pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harvest, to send forth labourers into his Harvest, *Mat. 9. 36, 37.* Verily those of you, friends, who are not sorry for the outing of so many Ministers of that sort in regard of their great Master *Jesu Christ*, their Parishes, and the Nation, (and the Preachers personal losses) all such of you are sorry Professors.

3. *How do your hearts stir within you, every one in regard of his own particular estate*? Are any of you glad, that ye are likely to hord up the more money, &c. do any of you fear the departure of the *few* *smiled* Ministers will be a considerable dammage to you in your spiri-

tual estate? For Job did esteem Gods word above the necessary food [of his body] chap. 23. 12. and the Lord by Amos, chap. 8. 11, 12. speaks of a famine of hearing the word, as a more mischievous famine and evil, than that of bodily food: and Isa. chap. 30. 20. saith to Gods people, *And though the Lord gives you the bread of Adversity and water of Affliction; yet (saith he) (to sweeten their sufferings) thy Teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but thy eyes shall see thy Teachers:* Beloved, Job dwelt where there were no great store of good Professors to counsel and encourage him, and to be a good example to him. But he was taught of God, to have due respect to his own spiritual welfare, *which many have not yet learned to have.*

4. *Are ye grieved in heart, that ye have not made better use of the opportunities which ye have had, or might have had of conversing and conferring with godly Ministers concerning your spiritual estate?* 10

5. *What use are ye resolved to make of them hereafter, before they be enforced to leave you?* For a wise man will make use of skilful and conscientious Physicians concerning his body, and of such Lawyers concerning his worldly estate, whilst they dwell near him, especially, when he knows or fears, they will shortly go to dwell far from him. But truly, I cannot say, I have observed such Ant-like good Husbandry to have been much practised of Professors, Prov. 6. 6, 7, 8.

6. *What course do you purpose to take for your spiritual welfare, and the good of your souls, when such Ministers are departed and gone from you?*

7. *How oft, and how heartily have ye hitherto pray'd for them, and given thanks to God for them, as men who have broken to you the bread of everlasting life?* What have ye asked of God for them? Are ye resolved to pray for them hereafter? What, and how frequently do ye purpose so to do? 11

8. *Have any of you blamed any of them for not dealing more faithfully, or more plainly with you concerning your sins?* Col. 4. 17. 2 Tim. 5. 1. So much by the way for your good.

2. In the second place, we are all to consider, that all the aforesaid evils came upon us, not without our Heavenly Father, but according to his Government. 1. *Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble come out of the ground, Job 5. 6.* 2. God is present every where, in all places, and sees, hears, and knows all the words, and thoughts of the children of men, Psal. 139. 7. to the 12. Heb. 4. 13. So that he cannot be ignorant of any thing which is done, spoken, or devised concerning us, or any of us. 3. *Power be- longeth*

longeth unto God, Psal. 62. 11. and so belongs unto him, that in the holy Scriptures, the Kingdom and the power is said to be his, Mat. 6. 13. and so, that he is called the only Potentate, 1 Tim. 6. 15. and all the Nations of the earth, compared to him, said to be as a drop of a Bucket, or as the small dust of the ballance, yea before him, as nothing, yea to him counted less than nothing, and vanity, Es. 40. 15, 16, 17. and his hand is not shortened (or weakened) that it cannot save, Es. 59. and, when he is pleased to work, none can turn it back and hinder it, Es. 59. 1. & 43. 13. and if he be for us, none can prevail against us, Rom. 8. 31. neither can God be compelled to do any thing, or to leave ought undone, or to yield or give way to the desire or purpose of any creature or creatures, to do any thing. 4. Neither can any thing befall us without God, without his Providence All our times are in his hand, Psal. 31. 15. All good things and all. Afflictions do proceed out of his mouth, Lam. 3. 38. that is, according to his secret appointment, either acting them, or voluntarily permitting them, and giving way to the desires and purposes of creatures to act them. Neither is there any evil that is Affliction) in a City [or in the Country] which the LORD hath not done, Amos 3. 6. Even Satan (with all his strength and cunning) could not afflict Job in any kind, in the least measure, without a Commission from the Almighty, nor when he had a commission from him, go one inch beyond it, Job. 1. and 2. Neither could the Devils

13 enter into the Swine, untill Jesus Christ gave them leave, Mark 5. 12, 13. And the Government of God is extended to the smallest matters; as Loss, Prov. 16. 33. a Sparrow falls not to the ground without him, Mat. 10. 29. and the very hair of our head are all numbered, v. 30. and do not fall from us without him. The LORD also, Es. 45. 7. saith, I form the light, and create darkness, I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things; and Lam. 3. 37. We see, that whosoever saith, this or that shall come to pass, it cometh not to pass, unless the Lord commandeth it: as David said of Shimei, The LORD hath bidden him, saying, curse David! 2 Sam. 16. 10, 11. and whatsoever the LORD pleased, that he did (saith the Psalmist) in Heaven, and in Earth, in the Seas, and in all deep places, Psal. 135. 6. He is able to give a new heart, and a new spirit to the greatest sinners; to blasphemers, oppressors, perjured persons, and persecutors, as he did to Adam and Manasse, and to Saul, afterwards called Paul; yea of stones to raise up Children to Abraham, Mat. 3. 9. and, without that blessed change, to restrain and repress the lewd desires, and affections, and purposes of Heathens, and Idolaters, during what time soever he pleaseth. For he promised the Israelites, that at the three high

Feasts of the year, when all their Males were to appear before the LORD, *no man should desire their land*, Exod. 34. 23, 24. and *Solomon* saith, when a mans wayes please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him, Prov. 16. 7. [Job 1. 21. & 2. 10. 2 Sam. 12. 11, 12. 1 Kings 22. 19, 24. Psal. 39. 9. & 75. 6, 7. Prov. 16. 1, 9, 33. & 21. 30. Jer. 10. 23. & 34. 22.] *It is not then without the determinate counsel and the providence of God, that these afflictions be come upon us.*

Qⁿ. What shall we say then of those men that afflict us?

Ans. What shall we say? why, that which the Spirit of Truth teacheth us to say: and he in the holy Scriptures saith, that *Shishak*, King of Egypt, came up against *Jerusalem*, because *Rehoboam* (King of Judah) and his subjects had transgressed against the LORD, 2 Chron. 12. 1, 2, 3, 4. and God calls the *Assyrians* the Rod of his anger (to wit, against his own people, whom they did molest and persecute) and saith, *That the staff in their hand, is his indignation*, [to wit, against his own people.] Isa. 10. 6. &c. & Psal. 17. 13, 14. The holy Spirit of God by the Psalmist calls wrong-doers, *Gods band, and Gods sword*, because they be managed, led, and over-ruled of God, as a mighty man *manageth his own hands, or a sword, club, staff or rod in them*: So that they cannot so much as hurt any one of their neighbours, either godly or ungodly, or their cattel, but when the most high God hath (secretly) bidden them do it, as *David* spake of *Shemsi*, 2 Sam. 16. 10, 11. And what is the meaning of Isa. 10. 15? Is it not this, That the *Assyrians*, in the works which they did against the *Israelites*, were to the Almighty, no other than, as the Ax to him who *beweth* with it, the *saw* to the *Sawier* who *saweth* with it, and the *rod and staff* to them who *whip and beat* others with them? Who can deny this construction of that verse? And so much of the second particular.

3. Thirdly, That we may go forward to the end of this business, 16 without hard thoughts of God, or charging him foolishly (Job 1. 21.) let us stedfastly believe, and seriously consider, That he, in giving way so far to the desires, purposes, devices and enterprizes of men, hath not dealt unjustly with any of us, nor done any of us any wrong. For, 1. He is righteous in all his wayes and works, Psal. 145. 17. and doth not afflict or grieve any of the children of men, causeless, or meerly for his pleasure. (so we are to understand the words of *Jeremy*, Lam. 3. 33.) 2. They who now are converted came into the world, as the Reprobates did. They were *shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin* (Psal. 51. 5.) and born *flesh*, Job. 3. 6. That is, wholly and altogether carnal and fleshly, and corrupt, dead in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2. 1, 5. and prone and apt

by nature to conceive *evil* desires, purposes and imaginations, and only such *continually*, Gen. 6. 5. and to trespass in the most monstrous and horrible sins that are, and that in the grossest and louest manner that can be, without any shame, or fear, or remorse of conscience, and even to despise the spirit of Grace, and to commit the sin against the holy Ghost, and so were by nature the children of Gods wrath, even as others, Eph. 2. 3. subject and obnoxious to the everlasting curse and endless wrath of God. 3. Neither Justification, nor the new Birth, doth bring with it an inward sanctification which is perfect in degrees, Phil. 3. 12, 13. Prov. 20. 9. but the forementioned base proneness unto sin remaineth, in some measure, in the best Christians; and all graces are somewhat imperfect, unto the end of this life, Rom. 7. 14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 24. neither do the most knowing Christians know otherwise than in part, 1 Cor. 13. 12. & 8. 2. 4. And hence it comes to pass, that we offend, actually, in many things, all (of us) Jam. 3. 2. 1 Job. 1. 8, 10. Mai. 6. 11, 12. even the holiest, and, for spiritual strength, the strongest of us; and that the holiest services and actions of the holiest persons be mingled with some corruptions and sin, and so none of them perfectly well performed, but all imperfectly, Psal. 119. 96. We have all cause to say, as Ezra, Chap. 9. 13. *Our God hath punished us less than our iniquities deserve*; yea, that he or she of us who hath sinned least, hath deserved much more tribulation, than our most gracious God hath laid on any of us. What may be said more of Gods wrath, as deserved by Professors: See *Mat. 30.*

18 4. *Fourthly*, We must believe and consider, That God, who doth all his works in wisdom, Psal. 104. 24. hath done wisely in afflicting us, and therefore afflicted us for good and fit ends.

5. *The fifth thing* to be considered is, why and for what causes and ends the Lord our God hath suffered all the evils before mentioned to come upon us? For he doth not so much as give way to the desires of men, without some sufficient cause, (as it were, moving him thereunto) nor without some fit ends whereat he aimeth, and for which he giveth way to them. By fit ends, I mean, fit in respect, either of his own honour and glory, or of the good of God's people, or of some of them. Now concerning this matter, I beseech you, Friends, as ye desire to escape, and to have your Brethren escape God's wrath, hearken to, and consider, what I shall say unto you.

Take heed ye be not deceived by the grand Impostors; *Satan, the Flesh, Sin, the World and your own hearts*. For, 1. *Satan* did beguile *Eve* through his (Serpentine) subtilty, Gen 3. 2 Cor. 11. 3. even when

he had nothing in her (*Job. 14. 30.*) and doth blind the eyes of many, lest the light of the Gospel should shine unto them, *2 Cor. 4. 4.* 2. The flesh lusteth against the spirit, *Gal. 5. 17.* as it were, continually, and our worldly lusts are to the eyes of the mind, as dust (stirred up by a Regiment of Horse marching) (*1 Pet. 2. 11.*) or smoak to the eyes of the body; keeping us from discerning so clearly as otherwise we might, between truth and error, and hiding the truth from us; and *Eph. 4. 22.* the old man is said to be corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. 3. Because sin is very deceitful, therefore the Apostle calls on us, to exhort one another daily, *lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*, *Heb. 3. 13.* 4. The world also (if ye take not great heed) will hide your eyes from your own sins, and deceive you, as it did *Demas*, *2 Tim. 4. 10.* 5. Lastly, the heart of man is deceitful above all things, *Jer 17. 9.* so that he that trusteth in his own heart, is a fool, *Prov. 28. 26.*

Verily, Friends, we are (through self-love and folly) apt o im- 19
pute our afflictions to many things, rather than to our sins, and every man, in a time of common calamities, to the sins of others, rather than to his own, and we who are called Phanaticks, to impute the afflictions which are common to us with others, wholly to the sins of others, and in no measure to our own sins. And I believe, many a man and woman of you doth not know, and duly consider, how far forth the afflictions of this time be to be imputed to his and her sins: and therefore I beseech you again, yea, I charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who (shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing, and his Kingdom; all of you, take all due care, and give all diligence, to know why, and to what ends it is, that God hath and doth afflict us; and particularly, every one of you, to discern what hand his sins and failings have had in bringing the said afflictions upon us, and to bear the Rod, and [him] who hath appointed it, *Mic. 6. 9.*

Now, if ye would know, what ends God aimeth at in afflicting us, 20
let us first know, what ends he aimeth at in afflicting men (indefinitely) Professors, or not Professors. And for this;

1. As all things are of him, and for him, *Rom. 11. 36.* as he made all things for himself, *Prov. 16. 4.* so, being a God of judgment, *Isa. 30. 18.* he doth all his works in wisdom, *Psal. 104. 24.* and in them all, aimeth at his own glory, or the good of those whom he hath given to his Son, *Rom. 8. 28.* or both. 2. But, speaking more particularly, God sends men punishments, chastisements and troubles, for these causes and ends:

1. That men may know and acknowledge, That the Kingdom 21

over all the creatures, is his; and that he ruleth all the earth, *Psal.* 58. 12. & 59. 13. *Isa.* 2. 17. *Ezek.* 6. 12, 23. & 22. 49.

2. To manifest his power, and that his threatnings recorded in the holy Scriptures be not in vain and of none effect, *Exod.* 9. 16. *Rom.* 9. 17. *Lev.* 10. 1, 2, 3. *Ezek.* 29. 49. *Job.* 9. 2, 3. *Rom.* 11. 22. *Ezek.* 6. 10.

3. As a sure and certain testimony of his righteous judgment to come, *2 Thess.* 1. 4, 5. *1 Pet.* 4. 17, 18.

4. That by them the sins of those who are afflicted, may be broken off, *Ezek.* 16. 41. & 23. 47.

5. That the hypocrisie and rottenness of some Professors may be made manifest, *2 Tim.* 3. 9. *Jud.* 4. 12. *Mat.* 13. 5, 6, 20, 21.

6. To make men call their sins, it may be *old sins*, to remembrance, *Psal.* 38. the title, &c. to search and try their wayes, to find out their sins, *Lam.* 3. 40. and to make them fear God, and seek unto him for mercy and favour, &c. to take heed of sinning against him, and of provoking him to anger, *Prov.* 3. 12. *Heb.* 12. 6. *Rev.* 3. 19. *Psal.* 94. 12. *Hos.* 5. 14. 15. with 6. 1, 2. *Psal.* 119. 61, 71, 75. This use a man ought to make, even of God's Judgments and p'agues on others, *1 Cor.* 10. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. *Psal.* 52. 5, 6.

22 7. That the Saints may be made *conform* to their Head, our Lord Jesus Christ in his sufferings, *Rom.* 8. 17. *Phil.* 3. 10. *Col.* 1. 24. *1 Pet.* 2. 21. & 4. 13, 15, 16.

8. For the trial of their graces, faith in Gods promises, love to Christ, fear of God, patience, &c. *Jam.* 1. 2. 12. *Gen.* 22. 10, 12. *Job* 1. & 2. &c. *Jam.* 5. 11. which if they be real and strong, are unto the honour and glory of *Jesus Christ*, *1 Pet.* 1. 6, 7. and to make them know, what naughty things be in their hearts. To which end God once left *Hezekiah*, *2 Chron.* 32. 31.

9. For the bettering of our spiritual estates, *Rom.* 8. 28. *Heb.* 12. 9, 10. *Psal.* 94. 12.

10. That the courage and patience of some Saints under the Cross, may be a good example to their fellow-Saints; that, their faith, comfort, courage and spiritual strength being augmented, they also may seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, by the like patient continuance in well-doing, *2 Cor.* 1. 6. *Col.* 1. 24.

11. God afflicteth both godly and ungodly persons, because of their sin, *Isa.* 59. 1, 2. *Jer.* 5. 25. *Psal.* 38. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. and that sometimes for *old sins*, *Job* 20. 11. & 13. 26. *Psal.* 25. 7. and, I think, hath afflicted some of us for sins committed in the late time of our exaltation, &c.

12. God afflicts men of both sorts for their sins; that, their sins being bitter to them, they may reform their wayes according to Gods word, and the mind of Christ, and be made in a greater measure partakers of Gods holiness, *Hos.* 5. 14, 15. & 6. 1, 2, 3. *Psal.* 119. 75, 71. *Heb.* 12. 8, 10.

13. And, that the Saints may not be condemned with the world, *Heb.* 12. 9. *1 Cor.* 11. 32.

14. As also to encrease our patience, experience and hope, *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5. and humility and meekness, to endure the wrath of God and rage of men, with a contented, quiet and calm spirit, and that we may be established, strengthened, settled; which work is seldom done thorowly without suffering a while, as *Peter* seems to intimate, *1 Pet.* 5. 9, 10. as a hedge-maker shakes the stakes, that he may fasten them in hedges.

15. Furthermore, we are troubled by the world, that we may not expect favour and peace from it, *Joh.* 16. 33. *Luke* 7. 31, 32, 34.

16. That we may not trust in our selves, but in God, *Deut.* 8. 3. 24 *2 Cor.* 1. 9, 10.

17. That effectual fervent petitions may be put up to God for them who are afflicted, by themselves and others, *Act.* 12. 5. *2 Cor.* 1. 11.

18. That, comfort and deliverance being bestowed on them by the means of many, praise and thanks may be given to God on their behalf by many, *2 Cor.* 1. 11.

19. Our heavenly Father doth by our afflictions and the gracious operation of his *holy Spirit*, as it were by fire, consume, and scoure, and cleanse away, out of us, our dross, scum, dirt, dung and all our spiritual filthiness, *Isa.* 27. 9. *1 Cor.* 3. 15. *1 Pet.* 1. 7. *Psal.* 12. 6. *Psal.* 66. 10, 11. &c. *Isa.* 1. 25. *Ezek.* 24. 6. 12. *Mal.* 3. 2, 3. *Mat.* 3. 11. that so holiness may be perfected in us.

20. He afflicts some who have not given due diligence to be assured of his fatherly love, (I believe) to make them more sensible of the want and benefits of that assurance, and to make them bestow more time and care to attain it.

21. God plagues the ungodly sometimes, that the Saints may rejoyce in and before God, *Psal.* 52. 5, 6. & 68. 4.

22. Sometimes the Saints do suffer afflictions to seal and confirm Gospel-truths (*Joh.* 3. 33. *Mar.* 16. 20. *Heb.* 2. 4.)

23. God doth sometimes afflict men, to drive their pride out of them; so preparing and fitting them for some great exaltation and prosperity, *Isa.* 27. 7, 8, 9.

Quest. But for which of all these causes or ends doth God afflict us that go under the name of professors.

Ans. 1. If any man thinks that God doth afflict some of us for the first five things, I shall not peremptorily reject his opinion; and that partly, because, I believe many of our professors be *meer Formalists*, and wholly destitute of true godliness: which therefore I believe, see *Marg.* 125, 126, 127, 128.

2. I believe God hath, and doth afflict many godly persons for all the rest of the ends, excepting the 21 and 22. And if any think God hath done it to drive pride out of very many of us, I shall *readily and cheerfully* subscribe to that, but with this earnest request to every one that is of that opinion, to consider *as wisely as he possibly can, whether he be one of them*: but whether we shall be exalted or no, I know not.

To speak more plainly;

True it is, speaking in a general manner, the sins of the Nation in general, may well be looked on as the cause of the common calamities of the Nation. But

- 26 As for the *afflictions and grievances* which are *peculiar to us* who are called *Professors* and *Phanatics*, the most forcible and prevalent cause of the beginning and continuance of them, the strongest impediment of our Petitions for Liberty, Peace, and Prosperity (the *causa sine qua non*) the cause without which things would not be with us, as they be, and that hath the most considerable hand in with-holding good things from us, is (I believe) *the sins of Professors*.

And because men be apt to look on the faults of others too much, and on their own too little, and to impute calamities common to themselves with others in too great a measure, to the sins of others, and in too small a measure (or not in any measure at all) to their own sins; Therefore I beseech all you who are Professors, to use great diligence to find out your sins, and to know every one of you in particular, what hand his or her sins have had in this evil work.

- 27 Now for the ends whereat our heavenly Father shoots in the *Afflictions and Troubles* which are *peculiar to us*; I verily believe, they be these.

1. By them to exercise and try our Faith, Zeal for Christ, Humility, Patience, and other graces, and our spiritual gifts, *Lam.* 3. 39. &c. *Heb.* 12. 11. *Pf.* 11. 5. *Jer.* 20. 12. *Dan.* 12. 10. *Zech.* 13. 9. *Job* 1. & 2. 1 *Pet.* 5. 6. that we may know, whether our graces be true graces or no, &c.

2. To make us see the benefits and use of grace, and of the assurance of Gods favour, more distinctly and clearly, than we have seen them in the times of our prosperity.

3. To purifie and make us white, *Dan. 12. 10. Mal. 3. 2, 3.*

4. To work in us patience and experience of Gods love and gracious assistance; and hope, a well-grounded and solid hope, wherof we shall not be ashamed. (For tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, &c. *Rom. 5. 3, 4, 5. Jam.*

1. 3.) and to *stablish, strengthen, and settle us*, *1 Pet. 5. 10.* that we may cleave to our Saviour *Jesus Christ* with full purpose of heart, *Acts 11. 23.* and *seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, by patient continuance in well-doing.* *Rom. 2. 7.* following the Captain of our salvation through thick and thin, whithersoever he goeth, not being overcome by either fair words or frowns; and to make it appear to the world that our Lord *Jesus Christ* hath such faithful servants which will be unto his praise, and honour, and glory, *1 Pet. 1. 7.* and unto the credit of the Gospel.

5. By the Rods wherewith God hath been, and is pleased to whip and scourge us, he calls upon us (*Mic. 6. 9.*) To consider our ways and hearts exactly, to accomplish a diligent search, to find out our sins and corruptions, *Lam. 3. 39. 40. Ps. 119. 59.* and, considering, what evil and bitter fruits they have brought forth to God, and to us, to *bumble our selves under the mighty and correcting hand of God*, *1 Pet. 1. 6.* more particularly, and more deeply, than formerly, and *accepting the punishment of our iniquities with the whole heart*, *Lev. 27. 41.*

6. To reform our conversings with God and man, and our behaviour universally, without exceptions or reservations, and especially *to purge and drive away our pride*; all this unto the honour of God, and the bettering of our spiritual estate, and the encreasing of our consolation.

7. To (learn to) use liberty and peace, and all kinds of prosperity well, *Phil. 4. 12.* to make better use of them, than many of us have heretofore, and altogether as we ought to use prosperity.

8. To give due diligence (which, I fear, many of us have not yet done) to make our (effectual) Calling and Election (unto everlasting life) sure, *2 Pet. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* and to know assuredly, that God is our Father, and that those of us, *who have no true Holiness*, may exercise themselves more frequently, and more seriously in the means, to get some.

9. It may be, God exerciseth some of us by light Afflictions, to prepare and fit us for greater and sorer sufferings, *2 Tim. 3. 12. Acts 14. 22. Rom. 2. 7.* or to press us, to cry mightily unto God, to prepare the called, chosen, and faithful, spoken of *Rev. 17. 14.* that so we may have a hand in the ruine of *Babylon*, or peradventure to prepare

us or our Children to be members of the Church of Christ, when its glory and splendor shall be next that of Heaven.

Hitherto of Gods ends in our Afflictions. Now for this, that Professors sins be the greatest hinderance of Professors Petitions for liberty, and peace, &c. I have thought good to shew the Reasons of my belief thus, (reserving to the last place, those, which some will look on, as having most of reason in them.)

1. (First) consider, I pray, what I have already said (*Marg. 16.*) of the Birth, iniquity, and the unavoidable fruits of it, to shew, that God hath not dealt unjustly with us in afflicting us: but consider further concerning sin in general.

2. Every sin is a transgression of the Law of the most high God, *1 John 3. 4.* which Law, because he made it, cannot but be holy, and just, and good, *Rom. 7. 12.* and all his precepts concerning every thing right, *Psal. 119. 128.* and for the same reason, because he is the Lawgiver, therefore whatsoever sin is committed against his Law, is committed against him, and (if I may speak so as they speak of earthly Kings) against his Crown and Dignity, and the true God being no little God, but infinitely great; therefore, although, sins being compared one with another, some of them be lesser than other; yet the least of them is a great sin, and a great evil, because committed against a great God. Yea, beloved, as wrongs done to men, are judged to merit lesser or greater punishments, according to the worthiness, Authority, and merit, of the party wronged, whether he be a Constable, Justice of the Peace, Privy-Counsellor, or of some other Rank: so whereas all the Nations of the earth, compared to God be as a drop of water of a Bucket; and as the small dust of the balance, yea as nothing, yea as less than nothing and vanity, *Es. 40. 15, 17.* and whereas his Kingdom is over all the Creatures, and an absolute Kingdom, and his dignity infinite, and he doth abundantly deserve the service and attendance of men; therefore, in very deed, every sin, even the least sin that is, deserves his curse, *Gal. 3. 10.* and the everlasting torments of Hell; (which peradventure some of you have not yet learned.) And if every sin doth deserve the horrible and everlasting Torments of Hell, what do all my sins deserve then? yea, or the sins of the most sinless? O that I could, that we all could admire the free grace and mercy of our God, as it is worthy, and praise, and extol it, as it is worthy, and trust to it, in and through Jesus Christ more cheerfully stir up our selves, and give all diligence to walk far more worthily of the Lord Jesus Christ unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, *Col. 1. 10.* unto his glory, and the credit of his glorious Gospel. *Gal.*

forbid, we should so magnifie the free grace of God, as to abuse it, as to turn it into wantonness and lasciviousness, as those, *Jude v. 4.* as to be bold to sin, because grace doth abound, *Psal. 130. 4. Rom. 2. 4. & 6. 1, 2, 5.* Far, O far be this from us.

But (secondly) it is probable,

That at this day not only national Churches, but also Churches of ³² other sorts have in them corrupt Members; and that some godly persons have transgressed in gross sins since they were begotten again with the word of truth. 33

R. For (and, I pray you, consider it well) so it was

1. With *Cain*, *Gen. 4. 8.* and with the Old World, *Gen. 6. 3.* 4, 5.

2. With the Children of *Israel*, *Exod. 32. Num. 25. 5. & 20. 10, 13. Deut. 9. 18. & 31. 29. Ps. 78. 58, 59. & 10. 6, 29, 32. Jer. 11. 8, 7.*

3. With the Kingdom of *Judah* apart, *2 Kings 23. 16. Es. 1. 4. & 3. 25. & 65. 4. Jer. 2. 13. & 7. 18. & 8. 19. & 17. 4. & 32. 29, 30. & 44. 3. Ezek. 8. 17. & 16. 26. Eze. 10. Neh. 5. Hag. 1.*

4. With the Sons of *Eli*, *1 Sam. 2. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.* of *Samuel*, *1 Sam. 8. 1, 2, 3, 4.* and of *David*, viz. *Amnon, Absalom, and Adinijah.*

5. In the time of *Christ's* preaching, he did not commit himself to many that believed in his name, because he knew what was in man, *John 2. 23, 24, 25.* some sought him, not for his Doctrine, but because they did eat of the loaves and were filled, *John 6. 26.* and many of his Disciples, after they had followed him for a while, forsook him, and walked no more with him, *John 6. 66.* consider also *Mat. 13. 28, 29, 30.*

6. In the Primitive Churches there were many corruptions and ³⁴ sins, *Acts 15. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 11, 12, 13. & 3. 3, 4. & 5. 1. & 6. 6, 7. & 11. 18, 19, 21, 29, 30. & 15. 12. 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21. Gal. 1. 6. & 2. 12, 13, 14. & 3. 1, 2, 3, 4. Phil. 2. 21. Col. 2. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. & 4. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. 2 Tim. 4. 16. Tit. 1. 16. & 3. 9. Heb. 5. 11, 12. Jam. 4. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14. & 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. 2 Pet. 2. 10.* and to the end of the Chapter, *John 3. 9, 10. Jude ver. 4. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19. Rev. 2. 4, 9, 14, 25, 26. Rev. 3. 1, 2, 9, 15, 16, 17.*

7. Yea, we find recorded in the holy Scriptures the sins and exorbitances of some, whom we know to have been godly; as *Noah*, *Gen. 9. 20.* *Lamech*, *Gen. 4. 24.* *Abraham*, *Gen. 20.* *Isaac*, *Gen. 26.* *Reuben*, and *Jacob*, *Gen. 27.* *Moses*, the Servant of the Lord, *Exod. 4. 10. & 7. 24. Deut. 1. 39. Ps. 106. 32, 33. Job chap. 7.* *Aaron*, the Saint of the Lord, *Exod. 32. Deut. 9. 20. Moses and Aaron*, *Num. 30.*

10, 11, 12. *Aaron* and *Miriam*, *Num.* 12. 9, 10; *Gideon*, *Judg.* 8. 27; *Samson*, *Judg.* 16. *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 16. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Hezekiah*, 2 *King.* 20. 2 *Chr.* 32, 24, 25, 31. *David*, a man after Gods own heart, 2 *Sam.* 11. & 12. *Solomon* (called *Jedidiah*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 25. that is, *Beloved of the Lord*) 1 *King.* 11. 1. &c. a Prophet that came from *Judah*, 1 *King.* 13. *Jeremy* *Jer.* 20. *Jonah*, *Jon.* 1. & 4. *Peter*, *Mat.* 16. 22, 23. & 26. 69. &c. *Peter* and *Barnabas*, *Gal.* 2. *Paul* or *Barnabas*, *Acts* 15. To whom, I think, may be added *Azzab*, 2 *Sam.* 6. 6, 7. and some of those who did eat and drink at the Lords Table unworthily, 1 *Cor.* 11. and of those forsakers, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16.

35 8. And some of the Sins of the said godly persons were not little sins, but great sins, as of *Aaron*, *David*, *Solomon*, and *Peter*.

9. Lastly, some of our sins are greater than many of us think them to bee; as unbelief, trusting in creatures, deceitful backbiting, biting, idle and foolish words, unfit jesting, not grieving for sins, our own and of others, not instructing, comforting, admonishing, reproving, not bestowing time and care to make what we hear, and read profitable to us, not making use of Ministers when we may, &c.) And this reason beloved is good, because as to the business of tempting, the Devils are in this Age altogether (such as they have been in all former Ages, and the world is altogether such as it hath been: only, to speak the truth, the world is much fuller of Baits and Allurements, and hath (I think) more taking snares, than in old time it had; and the cunning craftiness of the Devils and their ability to deceive (as some think) is augmented by experience.

36 And for Satans wrath, if his short time (spoken of *Rev.* 12. 12. be already begun, then he hath great wrath, which ye may do well to take into consideration, together with the Prophecies of the Apostles, *Peter*, and *Jude*, and *Paul*, that in the last days there should come scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 2 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. *Jude* ver. 17, 18. &c. and that in the last days men would have a form of godliness, and yet deny the power thereof, being lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, and high-minded, unthankful, unholy, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those who are good, and lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. &c.

(Thirdly) 1. God judgeth the earth, *Psal.* 73. 7. *Gen.* 1. 25. *Psal.* 58. 11. that is, ruleth and judgeth all the Inhabitants of the earth; and is present in all places (and sees and knows all things, even all the thoughts, purposes, desires, and imaginations of men) and almighty, to do whatsoever he pleaseth, *Jer.* 23. 23, 24. *Gen.* 1. 26. & 2 *Pf.* 139. 1, 2, 3. &c. *Heb.* 4. 13. *Gen.* 17. 1. *Isa.* 59. 1.

2. As Gods power is infinite, and his love toward his Children, a fatherly and tender love, *Es. 49. 15.* and his mercy infinite; and as our Advocate *Jesus Christ* doth appear in the presence of the Father for all his people always, *1 John 2. 1, 2. Heb. 9. 24.* and the Father *loves him always*, *Joh. 11. 41.* so his fatherly love is (if I may so speak) mingled with wisdom, (*Prov. 13. 24.*) to train up his Children in the way wherein they should go, (*Pro. 23. 6.*) to do his will, and that not only by instructing them, but also by *correcting and chastening* them, it may be with sharp Rods, (*Acts 14. 22.*) that at length they may do his will perfectly in Heaven with many correction, tears, or sorrow.

3. Ye are not ignorant of that which the Prophets have spoken concerning the sins and iniquities of Gods Covenant servants separating between their God and them, withholding good things from them, bringing afflictions on them, and hindring their prayers, *Your iniquities (saith Esay) have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that HE WILL NOT HEAR,* chap. 59. 1, 2. *your iniquities (saith Jeremy) have turned away these things [from you]; the former and the latter rain, and the appointed weeks of the Harvest] and your sins have withholden good things from you,* chap. 5. 24, 25. and *Lam. 3. 39. Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?*

4. The great God who formed all things, is not such a one as the ungodly man thinks him to be. *Psa. 30. 21, 22.* one, to whom it is all one, whether his holy, just, good, and wise Law be observed, or not. In my opinion, it agrees not with the infinite wisdom of God, to suffer any man to gain by any of his sins, (unless a man may be said to gain godly Repentance, or the like by them, &c.)

5. But that we may judge the better of this matter, let us consider as exactly as we can (if I may so call it) the Method which God hath used and will use in distributing punishments and afflictions, to humble and reform his people, &c.

(1.) God hath said, he doth and will render to every man according to his works, *Job 34. 11. Psa. 62. 13. Pr. 24. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Ezek. 33. 20. Mat. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. 12 Cor. 5. 10. Eph. 6. 8. Col. 3. 24, 25. Rev. 22. 12.* In which Scriptures by works and deeds, we must understand actions and acts of the heart and tongue, and the gestures of the body, as well as the works which we do with our hands, feet, swords, &c. and God is All-sufficient to perform, whatsoever he hath spoken, and cannot deny himself, *Psa. 36. 5. & 57. 10. 108. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 13. nor lies Tit. 1. 2. Ezek. 12. 28. & 26. 5. & 28. 10.*

(2.) God

(2.) God is no respecter of persons, *Dem. 10. 7. 2 Chron. 19. 17. Rom. 2. 11. He accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor, Job 34. 19. nor men of one Nation more than those of another Nation, Acl. 10. 34, 35. nor the Master more than the servant, nor men of one calling more than those of other callings, Eph. 6. 9. Col. 3. 25. nor men who are highly esteemed in the Church, more than those who are not, Gal. 2. 6. nor those who call him Father, and call on him as their Father, no not those who are indeed his children by the grace of adoption, as to corrections, more than others. He is not like those foolishly indulgent parents, that do spare the rod and spoil the child, Prov. 13. 24. If ye call him Father (or call on the Father, saith Peter) who without respect of persons, judgeth according to every mans work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. And what doth Gods judging every man and women according to their works, without respect of persons, import in that place? Verily, if the Apostles Inference be good (as doubtless it is) then it imports this; namely: that God will not spare his adopted sons and daughters in this world, merely by reason of their adoption, but deal with them, as he teacheth earthly parents to deal with their natural children, driving their foolishness (when there is cause) with rods of correction far from them, &c. Prov. 13. 21. & 19. 18. & 23. 13, 14. & 22. 15.*

41 (3.) So that, if ye would know, what sort of persons it is probable, God will assist, whilst they be living in this world, rather than and first before men and women of other sorts. I answer;

1. Those whom he knoweth; that is, owneth for his own people. *You only (saith the Lord) have I known of all the Families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you (punish you for) all your iniquities, Amos 3. 2. Such shall not escape with impunity, when others shall.*

2. Those who come nigh him. For this is that which *JEHOVAH* spake unto Moses; *I will be sanctified (saith he) in them who come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified, Lev. 10. 1, 2, 3. Which words are as if God had said, They who come nigh me, who are most holy, in the ministration of my holy Ordinances, or in the profession of my Religion; which is holy, must (above others) acknowledge and witness the belief and estimation which they have or ought to have of my Holiness, in both words and deeds, in that way and after that manner which I have chosen, even according to the prescript rules of my word: and if they do not so, I will avow my own Holiness, and make it appear, that my justice and severity is without partiality and respect of persons, by executing just vengeance against their transgressions, that others may fear to offend.*

3. Those whom God the Father hath given to the Son. For, 42

R. 1. What saith wise Solomon? *Whom the LORD loveth, (saith he) he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth, Prov. 3. 12. which Heb. 12. 6. is expressed thus: Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.* From whence is made this inference, v. 7, 8. *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons: But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all (sons) are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

R. 2. In the holy Scriptures, our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ* is compared, and that partly in respect of the tribulations which his members must endure before they come to their everlasting Rest, to a Physician or Mediciner, *Mat. 9. 12.* to a Refiner, *Mal. 3.* and to a Fanner or Winnower of Wheat, *Mat. 3. 12.*

1. He is the great Physician of the soul, *Mal. 4. 1, 2.* and such a 43 friend to his people, as loves them more than any man loves his friend, *1 Job. 4. 19. Job. 3. 16, 17. & 15. 13. Rom. 5. 6, 7, 8, 10* and a most faithful Physician and Friend to them; and therefore will minister to them (according to his transcendent wisdom) *such Medicinals as they have need of, and when need is, (1 Pet. 1. 6.)* for a season, very bitter pills and potions, and very sharp corrosives, to purge away the putrified, dead and rotten flesh which is in our souls; (that is, send them chastisements, it may be, sore afflictions and sharp temptations, to make their sins and worldly lusts bitter and grievous to them; that they may grow weary of them, and more desirous to be rid of them; and that they may vomit the love of their sins and base lusts out of their souls, (*Rev. 3. 16. Psal. 85. 8. Prov. 26. 11. 27. 2. 22.*) To make them take better heed to their wayes, and reform their carriage more complearly, *Psal. 119. 71, 59, 75. & 94. 12.* and to abstain from all the dainties of the wicked (*Psal. 141. 4.*) and whatsoever is against the health of the soul; that they may not need such unpleasing Medicinals, &c.

2. He is that Refiner of souls, of whom it is said, *Mal. 3. 2, 3.* 44 *Who shall abide the day of his coming? for he is like a Refiners fire and Fullers sope: [viz. to burn up and scoure the spiritual dross and filth out of mens souls and wayes, and to maketh their souls white, Mat. 9. 3.] And he shall sit [as one who will stick to his work, to compleat and perfect it] as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purifie the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness. Also Isa. 48. 10, 11. the Lord saith; Behold, I have refined thee, I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction, For my own sake, even for my own sake will I do it, &c. And Zech. 13. 9. I will*

will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on me, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, the LORD is my God. See also 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7.

- 45 3. As to fanning, John the Baptist, *Mat. 3. 12.* saith of Christ, *Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, &c.*

R. 3. As the rich man, *Luk. 16.* being ungodly, did receive all his good things in this world, and godly *Lazarus* all his evil things in this world, *Luk. 16. 25.* so all other ungodly persons shall receive all their good things in this world, *Psal. 17. 14. & 73. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.* and all godly persons, all their evil things in this world, *Rev. 14. 13.*

- 46 4. It is more probable, that judgment and affliction shall begin at the house and family of God, than at those who are not of his family. As a man, whose great love toward his children is mingled with much heavenly wisdom; although he will take care and pains, and bestow time to reclaim from their evil ways, all that are under his authority and power, yet he will take special care of his children to draw (and if need be) drive them out of their sinful and vain courses, and begin with them as soon as they be able to endure stripes, *Prov. 13. 24.* so the nearer men are to God, the more likely he is, to visit their sins upon them, *Amos 3. 2.* and to begin with them; (as he did *Jer. 25. 15.* to the 29. and 1 *Pet. 4. 17.*) and after they be duly humbled under his chastening hand, in due time, to cast the rods where-with he hath corrected them, into the fire, unless they also do take notice of Gods judgement, and cease from their sinful practices.

Obj. But here, it may be, many a Professor will say in his heart; what is all this to me? I hope, my sins have had no hand in pulling down Gods wrath, &c.

- 47 *Ans.* To such and all other Professors I say; If none of you have transgressed in those kinds of sin, for which the Lord did punish the old world, and *Hophni* and *Phineas*, and *David*, and *Solomon*; yet he may in his wisdom (according to his method of humbling and reforming offenders) see cause to punish or chastize you; and that among other sins.

1. For not sanctifying him according to the prescript Rules of his holy word, when ye come nigh him: As he did *Nadab* and *Abihu*, sons of *Aaron*, *Lev. 10. 2, 3.*

2. For your secret sins. As he did those spoken of by *Moses*, *Ex. 90. 7, 8, 9.* And *Achan*, *Jos. 7.* And *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Act. 5.*

3. And for *sin of omission*; for not doing those things which ye ought to do: As he did King Saul, 1 Sam. 15. 3. &c. and one of the Herods immediately with a horrible death, for not giving the glory (of his Oration) to God, *Mat.* 12. 12, 13. And Eli, a godly man, with death, by breaking his neck suddenly (1 Sam. 4. 18.) for honouring his sons above the LORD, (1 Sam. 29. 30.) in not punishing and restraining them, (1 Sam. 3. 13.) for and from their evil practises: And Aisa, a godly King, for not relying on the LORD his God, and not seeking to him, 2 Chron. 16. 7. Our Saviour also in the time of his humiliation, did look round about on many persons with anger for their sinful lives; Mark 3. 4, 5. And Paul did pray God, that the sin of the Christians at Rome, in forsaking him, and not standing with him at his first answer, might not be laid to their charge, 1 Tim. 4. 16.

And all the sins mentioned, (*Mat.* 25. 42, 43.) as sins which shall 48 be charged on the damned in the great day of Judgment, are sins of omission, as not visiting, and not relieving; it may be, because so many do make so light a matter of such sins; and because so many Professors do make so light a matter of them, therefore I have thought good to speak the more of them.

4. God may judge you for sins which are comparatively little, and in 49 the eyes of many, of no very gross appearance. As he did Moses against whom the anger of the LORD was kindled, and ye see for what, *Exod.* 3. & 4. especially Chap. 4. 14. (yea the LORD met him, and sought to slay him, *Exod.* 4. 24.) and *Numb.* 20. 10, 12, 24. *Deut.* 34. 4. 5. & *Psal.* 106. 32, 33. ye see, why Moses and Aaron died, and could not bring the congregation of Israel into the Land which the LORD gave them: So also God dealt with Miriam, *Numb.* 12. and those who looked into the Ark of the LORD, 1 Sam. 6. 19. and *Deut.* 2 Sam. 6. 8, 9. & *Chron.* 1. 3, 9, 10. and the Prophet which came from Judah, 1 King. 13. Mr. Walter Cradock (who was a right godly man, and an excellent soul-Preacher) was of this opinion, that of all the Professors which are damned, the greater part are damned for little sins, and the abuse of things indifferent.

5. God may judge you, for your old sins, the sins of your youth; 50 *Job* 13. 23, 24. as ye your selves have forgotten, or think God hath forgiven, as he doth punish wicked persons for the sins of their youth *Job* 20. 11. and as he made *Job* to possess the iniquities of his youth at childlike age, *Job* 13. 16. See *Jur. & Trem.* and the Assembly men on those two places, and *Job* 14. 17. Also David's sin cause to pray unto God, not to remember the sins and transgressions of his youth, *Psal.* 119. 17.

6. As God sent a famine of three years for a sin of King *Saul*, long after his death, *1 Sam.* 21. so I believe he may chastize a man for the sins which he hath committed in the time of his unregeneracy, long after the time of his second birth; especially if he hath not searched duly for them, or not humbled himself daily for them, or doth not walk humbly with God.

7. God may judge you for sins capable of such excuses as many of us possibly think to have a pretty deal of reason in them. As he did not only King *Saul*, *1 Sam.* 13. & to the 25. & Chap. 15. but also *Moses*, *Numb.* 20. & *Psal.* 106. 32, 33. (see before) and *Uzzah*, *2 Sam.* 6. 6, 7, and *1 Chron.* 13. 9, 10, and the Prophet which came from *Judah*, *1 King.* 13.

51 8. God may deal severely with those of you, who are really godly, for your sin. As he did with *Moses*, *Aaron*, and *Eli*, (see before) and with *David*, *2 Sam.* 22. &c. and with *Heman*, who was afflicted and ready to die from his youth up, (mark that) and while he suffered the terror of the LORD, was distracted, *Psal.* 88. 15. But read and consider the Psalm.

9. God may punish or chastize us for our sins, notwithstanding, upon admonition, we do confess we have sinned against him, as he did, not only King *Saul*, *1 Sam.* 15. 24, 25, 26. but also *David*, notwithstanding he did so confess, *2 Sam.* 12. and much more than that, *Psal.* 51.

10. God may judge us for our other mens sins; I mean, for the sins of others, imputing them to us, because we have not instructed, called, admonished and reprov'd them, or not corrected them according to our duty; not done what God called us to do, and which we ought to have done, to keep them from sinning. For why is it said, *Jer.* 7. 1. that the children of *Israel* committed a trespass in the accursed thing when *Achan* only had trespassed personally? Study this matter seriously, I beseech you: for there was a time when the number of faithful men was very small, *Psal.* 12. 1, 2. *Prov.* 20. 6. *Jer.* 23. 38. & *Prov.* 30. 6. And now I do testify and say, that, notwithstanding this dispensation calls upon all professors, especially those who take upon them, as Ministers of the Gospel, to deal faithfully, yet I have not observed many signs of the measure of faithfulness which the state of things calls for.

53 11. God may judge us for our sins concerning things indifferent, apparel, hair, &c. As he did those, *Zeph.* 2. 8. who were clothed with strange apparel. See the opinion of Mr. *Cradock* a little before.

53 12. Do not Professors yet know, that *London* is destroyed? Consider, I pray you, whether the gay Lady-like apparel of Shop-women did not

help to bring the pestilence into it, to destroy thousands of the Inhabitants; and afterward, the Jesuit-like policy and too gallant fashions of those who were bound, in a special manner above others, to reprove the Lady-shopwomen, and ought rather to have apparelled themselves with sackcloth, or like plain Yeomen; whether this did not strike the Ministers out of the gap (Ezek. 22. 30, 31. 2 Sam. 24.) and keep it open for the fire to enter into the houses to burn them.

12. I believe, the Lord may afflict a very godly man in his worldly estate according to the proportion of the ill gotten goods which he possesseth; although he himself hath not gotten any part thereof by sinful and indirect means, (nor knows, that any of his friends did so get any part of it.)

13. I also believe, many professors, and some godly persons, do either take little or no notice of some of their sins, or else make too light a matter of them, and hereby make them the more ugly in the most pure eyes of God, and provoke him the more to scourge them.

14. It is probable, that our wise God, when he purposeth to vouchsafe his people great prosperity, or they do expect to be highly exalted; that then he will chastize and scourge them, if milder sufferings will not prevail, sharply, and not cease scourging them sorely, till he hath wrought among them a great Reformation suitable to such an exaltation. For it is a great absurdity, for them to look for such a change without taking care to reform themselves and their interiors accordingly. (One thing of another sort, &c. which peradventure may be of some good use; God did send two She-bears out of the Wood, to tear forty and two of those little children which mocked Elisha the Prophet with his bald head, 2 King 2. 23, 24.) And thus I have shewn you in part the method, after which God hath disciplined his people of old; the greater part whereof I have declared by examples in the holy Scriptures.

Part. 4. (Fourthly) now I shall set before you an argument about this.

1. This my opinion, that Professors sins be the most powerful and effectual hindrance of the liberty and peace of Professors, and of their prayers for it, I have held, at least, two years: during which time my God hath not so much as caused me to stagger concerning it, notwithstanding my prayers unto him concerning my affairs, and concerning this business in particular.

2. Notwithstanding I have published this my opinion at divers meetings in *Brislaw*; yet none of the Professors of that City (as far as I know, or have heard) have either first or last declared their dislike

of it, although they had time and opportunities enough (before I left that City) to do it.

3. I think, he was a godly *Minister of Christ*, who from 1 Cor. 11. 30. did infer, that *where there is much sickness, there is much sin*; and that he might as well have said, *where there is much Affliction,*

56 4. *John Price*, a godly Citizen of *London*, but a Native of *Hertford*, (being one of them who lost much by this Revolution since 1639.) *not long before his death* (it may be, being then *more sensible* of his own failings, and the failings of other Professors, than formerly) did in his Letter unto me, write of them, who have been called *Roundheads*, and of the change of their Estates, (and (among other passages) use these very words; *The truth* (said he) *is, We have been full, foolish, froward, and wanton, and almost spoiled for want of correction.* So he *verbis*, Heb. 11. 4.

5. An eminent Minister of *Bristol*, who preached his Farewel Sermon in *August* 1662. called Mr. E. H. when I spake of the duty of *reproving sins*, said, *It is generally neglected*: Which, I think, he would not have said, if he had not thought Professors wanted it.

6. Another Preacher of *Bristol* at a Meeting, in his Sermon or Prayer, I heard speak of *profane Professors*, that was his word.

7. A Woman of a (high) way (in Religion) being in company with other professors, some of them spake of the Changes since 1639. Whereupon she said, *I think*, affliction would do me good, and some of you also.

57 8. I have also heard diverse Professors say, as their own words, or words which they did approve of, uttered by other Professors, *If we were as ready* (or ripe, or fit; some such word) *for mercy*, as our Adversaries be for wrath, we should soon be delivered. And, I believe it is somewhat common with Professors, to speak such words: but who endeavours diligently and strenuously to reform Professors?

58 Part 5. (Fifthly) I believe many of us are at yet without Christ, *seriously void of true grace*, wholly flesh, altogether carnal and fleshly, and stark dead in trespasses and sins, (*John* 3. 36. *Eph.* 2. 1, 11, 12.) so that they do never serve God in faith or humility, never in love or with any filial fear, or godly reverence, never worship God in the spirit, never do any thing well, in a holy manner, never serve God acceptably, so as to have their persons or services accepted with God. *John* 15. 5. *Heb.* 12. 28. This is true of every one of them, so that

their iniquity must needs be very great. Only I shall somewhat confidently hope, that, if God shall keep them constantly to the means of Regeneration any long time, that then he will beget them again hereafter, and not suffer them to die in their sins. That there be such Professors, see *Marg.* 125, 126, 127, 128.

Part. 6. (Sixthly) *The iniquity and sins of such professors, and of those who have true grace* (as well as of others) is *greatened* many ways (but with some difference.)

As 1. *By the multitude of the kinds of sin*, wherein they trespass; And by the greatness of some of them, (such as have been *Feasting and Musick with dancing* in the night, which I account *Revelling*; *Gal. 5. 20, 21. 1. Pet. 4 3.* and one Frolick in the presence of five Non-conforming Ministers, part of them having a hand in it.) And by persevering in some sins, adding one trespass to another, without taking care and using diligence to cease from such practices; And by trespassing in the presence of irreligious persons (as it were, publishing their naughtiness in *Gahad and Askelon*) without shame or fear; so giving occasion to laugh and scoff at them in secret, and to think and speak evil of the holy servants and right wayes of the Lord, *2 Sam. 12. 14. Ezek. 36. 20, 23. Rom. 2. 24.* and to harden their hearts against his holy word. Oh how much, as it were, air, water, earth, wood, dust, dirt, dung and filth some Professors have within them, which doth issue forth in their conversings?

2. *By the foul and base work which sin makes.* For by it we do *60* grieve a most holy, just, and good Law; trespass against the Kingdom and Authority of the most high God, pollute his holy name, which we ought to sanctifie, *Mat. 6. 9.* defile his image, as it were, by casting dung, dirt, or dust upon it; grieve his holy and good spirit, *Eph. 4. 29, 30.* Who is our all-sufficient Teacher and guide, *John 16. 3.* by whom all we are sealed unto the day of Redemption, *Eph. 4. 30.* and disgrace the Gospel of Christ, and the right wayes of the Lord; yea, Professors thereby do in a special manner pollute Gods name, and discredit the true Religion, and every one of us Professors disgrace that way in Religion, the credit whereof ought to be very dear to him, because *he esteems it the best and most excellent of all ways.*

3. *By the many benefits which our most gracious God hath been, 61* and is still pleased to bestow upon us. For by them he obligeth, and, as it were, hireth us to serve and obey him universally according to his word; and the more plentifully he extends his goodness to us in giving us blessings of any sort, and the more excellent or necessary the blessings be; which he vouchsafeth to bestow on us, the greater and stronger

stronger is the engagement. God's goodness calls on us to fear God, and leads us to amendment of life, *Psal.* 130. 4. *Rom.* 2. 4. and consequently aggravates the iniquity of our disobedience, so we are to understand, *Ps.* 9. 13, 14.

Quest. But what are these benefits? (For none of us all do remember them so frequently, and weigh them so exactly as we ought.)

Ans. They are,

1. Life, Food, Raiment, Harbour, Physick, Surgery, Liberty and Peace of the Body; Health, Strength, and Nimbleness of the body; the good state and use of our Limbs and Senses, inward and outward; Books and writings of many sorts, the faculties of the soul, understanding, memory, invention, conscience, power to will, humane wisdom, skill in Arts and Sciences, worldly wealth.
- 62 2. The holy Scriptures, godly Sermons, Expositions of the Scriptures, and other godly Books; Gods promises and *threatnings*, rebukes, and checks by the conscience and men, Ministers, or not Ministers, *Psal.* 141. 1. the company and good examples of godly persons, and conference with them; their love and prayers with us and for us; Exercises and Meetings, the Sacraments, and all the holy Ordinances; the knowledge of spiritual things, of things belonging to our Peace, and the right manner of Gods service, of God and our selves, a conscience awakened; the fatherly love of God, our Adoption, Justification, and pardons, (*Es.* 55. 7) our being members of *Christs* Mystical body and Heirs of Heaven; our sorrow for sin and stock of Grace, Faith, Hope, love toward God, love toward men, godly and ungodly friends and enemies, filial fear of God, Humility, Zeal, &c. our spiritual strength, *Jesus Christ* dwelling in us by faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. and the holy spirit of God dwelling in us, to teach us, and to guide and rule all the faculties of our souls all the days of our Pilgrimage, and spiritual warfare.
- 63 *Note* 1.^o Of the aforesaid good things, some God gives to men of all sorts, *Mat.* 5. 45. *Luke* 6. 35. some are peculiar to true believers.
2. But whosoever is partaker of Gods goodness in good things of any sort, the iniquity of his disobedience is thereby *exaggerated according to the measure of the bounty.*
3. The fuller and clearer any mans *light* is, as to the discerning of spiritual things, by so much the greater is his iniquity, if he doth not make such use as he ought of his Light.
4. If a Professor who hath no grace, doth think, he hath some, and

that he is justified from all his sins, and that God is his Father, and the like; I believe, this his conceit doth aggravate his sins.

5. *By all the means of grace and amendment of life and obedience.* 64 And such as are all the benefits, blessings, and good things which God gives us, *Acts 17. 25.* But *the destruction and vengeance from the Almighty*, which hath been upon us and our Brethren by Nation and Religion; the Pestilence, the Sword, *the horrible burning of Houses*, and the losses and sufferings which are peculiar to professors, as also *the late prodigies* are Messengers sent of God, not only to warn men out of their sins, but even to fear and drive them out, *Es. 26. 9. & 27. 7, 8. 9. Psal. 94. 12. & 119. 67, 71.* which Messengers and him who sent them, if we hear not, this our turning of a deaf ear to our Creator and most bountiful Benefactor and to his Messengers, whatsoever the sins be, to which we cleave, adds much to them, and greatly provokes Gods wrath against us.

Quest. But what if much of a mans disposition and behaviour under the rods of God be point blank contrary to that which God calls for by them; and even to that good whereof afflictions are not much less than a natural cause, and which men in such cases are somewhat apt to do. *Arise*, when men are cast out of a sufficient Estate into a very low Estate, and without any certainty of a competent maintenance for them and their Wives and Children; if then they should be very high-minded, and full of mirth and jollity?

Ans. Verily I cannot but think, *this cross carriage doth provoke the great God who formed all things, greatly.* Beloved, *This is a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity by the Lord GOD of Hosts in one of the valleys of Vision, wherein the Lord GOD of Hosts calls to weeping and to mourning, (the Prophet adds, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth.) And behold joy and gladness, Es. 22. 5, 12, 13.* 66 Plainly God hath brought many of us into a low Estate, of whom *some are not lowly, they do not lie low.* He hath deprived many of us of much of our worldly Estates, and brought some of us out of a high and plentiful Estate, into a very low and needy Estate, without a certainty of worldly things necessary for us and our Wives and Children, by which *he calls*, not only for the humbling of the body, but also for *humbleness of mind, and for mourning, and weeping*; yea, men are apt in such cases to mourn and weep, and to speak, as if their hearts were not haughty; yea, *some of us* have bewailed our low Estate to men (it may be, to God also) and spoken of Imprisonments, Oppression, &c. And yet, notwithstanding all this, *behold, joy and gladness in abundance, smiling and laughing, and jollity, and pride, (as if they*

were sure of a very high estate to morrow, Jam. 4. 13, 14. Prov. 27. 7.
 67 And Non-conforming Ministers, as if they had been counselled by Balaam (a little before the burning of London) appalled and adured (instead of plain Yeomen) like gallants, and such a Ministers wife on vouchsafeing to take the pains to teach her own children. Was that so, because that part of her gown which did sweep the dust, was longer than the whole tail of a Pea-ken, or because she was proud?

5. By transgressing a holy, just and good Law, and trespassing against the God of heaven and earth, who gives us all the good things which we have, by polluting his blessed Name, and doing all the evil works before mentioned (Marg. 60.) for a very trifle; as a very little profit (peradventure not worth a half-penny) or a very little ease, or a very little pleasure (unless our hearts be monstrous base) or to please the company; it may be profane wretches. And this many of us do not duly consider, how great an aggravation it is.

6. By sinning without any occasion, or any Tempter, excepting our selves, and the pride, folly and naughtiness of our own hearts. As that Minister who kept his stock of pride, when he lost his Benefice, although he had not learning enough of any sort for a wise man to be proud of it. Occasions of sinning do call for milder dealing. See the Geneva Tr. Gal. 6. 1.

68 7. By not making use of the power which we have, in resisting evil examples and evil counsel, and inward motions before they break out in our speeches and actions; by not reforming those things which are in our power, as our tongues and bodies; by not abstaining from the sins which it is in our power to abstain from; as vain, idle, foolish, unseemly speeches, and the like; and by not doing the duties, which, it is in our power, to perform; as the instruction and correction of our children and servants, and the like, and although very much of this might be done without any considerable inconvenience. Many of us do not so much of it as might be so done.

8. By making a small matter of great sins, and of small sins nothing.

9. By making a light matter, or nothing, of our own sins, because other folks be greater sinners than we.

10. By slighting, or worse than slighting, the counsel, admonitions and rebukes of God by his Preachers, and our illightened and awakened consciences, and by quenching the spirit, 1 Thes. 5. 19. Is this not making no good use of such things as these, nothing? Is thy hearing of thy sins against God's Word in the mouths of the Preachers, and the checks of thine own conscience, and the good desires and purposes stirred

stirred up in thy heart by the good Spirit of God; is such a *keeping of Gods enemies so near thy heart*, nothing? How long shall he who is the Judge of all the earth, stand at the door of thy heart, knocking for admission? *Rev. 3. 20.*

11. *By the repugnancy, opposition, disagreement, or whatsoever it should be called, which is between our exorbitant behaviour, and things whereby we should be moved to behave our selves better.* Of which things, 1. One is, the high and great dignities to which we are exalted; especially to be children of God, members of Christ's mystical body (of his flesh and of his bones, *Eph. 5. 30.*) Christ's Friends, *Joh. 15. 14, 15.* and coheirs with Christ of the Kingdom of heaven, *Rom. 8. 16, 17.* For what said *Nehemiah, Chap. 6. 11*? *Should such a man as I flee? Who is there, that being as I am, would go into the Temple to save his life? I will not go in.* And so should we say; should such as we are, sin against our good God? who is there, that being as I am, would sin to save his life? By God's help, I will not sin.

Q.1. *But what if we do but think, we are such?*

70

Ans. Yet we should abstain from sinful practises the rather, in regard of the high conceit which we have of our spiritual estate; and if we do not, *that conceit doth exaggerate our iniquity.*

2. The promises, vows, covenants, leagues, and it may be, oaths, general and particular, which we have made or entred into, to God, or men, or both, especially if without compulsion, *Deut. 23. 21. Eccl. 5. 4. Psal. 66. 13, 14. Psal. 119. 106. Psal. 50. 5. especially some of our covenants.*

3. Our specious and large forms of godliness, *2 Tim. 3. 5.* The Sermons of some are indeed too trim and gaudy (*Nimis pleni Floresculis, &c.* and the prayers of some too long, *Mat. 7. 21.*

4. Our words in prayer and conference, savouring and making a shew of much holiness, faith, humility, meekness, mortification, sobriety, patience, zeal, courage, heavenly mindedness and contempt of worldly things, love of God, affiance in God. As *Sauls, 1 Sam. 14. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43.* and *John's, 2 King. 10. 15, 16.* Many a professors conversation answers some of his speeches very poorly.

5. Our being almost singular and alone in our zealous or earnest defence of the morality and perpetuity of the Lord's Sabbath. This greatens the iniquity of our taking no more care to keep it wholly holy, and to spend it wholly on God's service, and the soul; according to the Commandment.

6. Our judging Governours of the Common-wealth and Church, (it may be, with bitter and railing speeches) for not using fit means to

reform the whole, and in the mean while *doing the same things our selves, Rom. 2. 1, 21, 22, 23. viz. in not contributing to a universal Reformation, what we might, in seeking with due care and diligence to reform (as to Religion, and good manners and civility, those small parts, parcels and particles, which are under our own power and government; our own wives, children and servants; yea, such as do not rule well their own families, will blame others for not ruling well theirs.*

- 7² 7. *Our straining at a gnat, and swallowing half a camel; scrupling or making conscience of a very small matter, it may be, that which is nothing, no sin at all, and not abstaining from frowler practices, Mat. 23. 24. Mark. 7. 1. to 6. Joh. 18. 28. yea, I doubt, some professors do pretend, that this or that is against their conscience, when in very deed it is not.*

8. *The high esteem and conceit, 1. Which every one of us hath of his own way in Religion. O how excellent my way in Religion is in comparison of all other wayes? whether thou beest called a Presbyterian, or, &c. if thy way be the best of all wayes, take heed thou be not worse than the worst Saint that walks in it, Gal. 6. 3. 2. Which many of us have of our personal endowments; graces and spiritual gifts, prayers. O how great a measure, how high a height of grace, faith, &c. some think they have attained! Methinks I hear some speaking like the Pharisee, Luke 18. 11, 12. God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as yonder Cavalier, or as yonder Conformist; and others like the Wardens, Omnia bene, or the Christians of Laodicea, Rev. 3. 17. I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. When indeed they be wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, at least in comparison of many of their fellow-professors, and their conversation very irregular.*

- 7³ 9. *The strong and confident expectation which some of us have, of an eminent and speedy exaltation: (I hope, it is without a purpose to rebel against any King, excepting that evil one who is mentioned, Rev. 9. 11.) which expectation calls to such Expectants for a suitable reformation of their behaviour, and to use all good means to reform their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, and their men-servants, and their maid-servants, and the strangers who are within their gates (Prov. 23. 6. Exodus 20. 10.) that they also may be fit to partake of so great prosperity, Prov. 22. 29.*

10. *Gods exceeding great condescension and humbling of himself, (Psal. 113. 5, 6.) in waiting, that he might be gracious to us, Isa. 30. 18.*

and not so long since in, as it were, stooping to us, yielding to our prayers, to preserve, protect and deliver us, yea, in doing more than all this for us, when very many of us were very great sinners, and did not yield our selves to him, and humble our selves before him, so as to be thoroughly willing, and duly careful, to abandon all our sins universally. And this hath greatened, and doth greaten our iniquity.

11. *Our low estates* do call to many of us for *meekness and lowliness of heart*, and to some with a loud voice: instead whereof there is *much pride and stateliness*.

12. Our sins may be aggravated *by returning to our vomit*, 2 Pet. 2. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. Are not some of us like the Dog, which is turned again to his vomit, and to the Sow, which is washed, to her wallowing in the mire? Have not some professors, after they had escaped the pollutions of the world, and a considerable time abstained from them; have they not after this turned again unto folly? *Psal. 85. 8. Psal. 125. 4, 5.* And do not very many of us in religious exercises, especially fasts, (by the mouths of the *Speakers*) confess our sins, and bewail our folly in committing them, (which is an inferior way of *vomiting them up*) and afterward praise them as formerly? And is this, in your sight nothing? Verily, whatsoever it is in your eyes, I think it to be a greatening of our sins, and an addition to our provocations. What said Mr. *Walter Cradock* at a private Meeting? *A Whelp* coming into the *Room*, vomited before us, and after a while sicked up again what he had vomited. *Whe* eupon, *There is a Sermon for you*, quoth he. And by all these Particulars the iniquity of Professors is or may be aggravated.

13. The iniquity of some Professors is exaggerated *by their unwillingness to see their sins, or to have others to take notice of them*. Whence it is, that they do not take due care, and use due diligence *to find out and take good notice of their sins*: As a Constable, not being desirous to apprehend a *Thief*, will either not at all search for him, or search negligently. But, it may be, some Professors do declare this their unwillingness to others, by being *displeased and angry with those who tell them of their sins*. And what is the cause of this their anger? Sure the cause is naught: For they ought to esteem *a reproof, a kindness*, as David did, *Psal. 145. 5. 1 Sam. 25. 32, 33.* But men cannot endure to have their friends ill spoken of. Therefore also it is, that some, when they see their sins, yet will not seem to see them; yea, it may be, when their consciences do tell them, that the Preacher means them, yet they will not seem to be of the same mind with their conscience. Like Dr. *Ferne*, who

who when it was intimated to him, that he was aimed at, would whine out, *He doth not mean me, He doth not mean me.* And so sometimes it comes to pass, that the Preachers words be heard in vain, *1 Cor. 6. 1.*

- 76 14. Our sins are also greatedened by God's wrath and vengeance upon others, *Dan. 5. 18. &c.* but especially upon our selves, and others, at home and abroad, by Sea and by Land, in City and Country, by the Sword, Pestilence, Fire, &c. We ought to hear Rods of no great roughness, and without a heavy load of Afflictions, so as to cleanse our wayes, and to let go our sins, *Isa. 27. 7, 8, 9.* But the Sword, Pestilence, Burning of houses, and the like, do call on us again, and with a very loud voice, even for a full and compleat cleansing of all our wayes to the uttermost. To speak home; *The Lord hath proved us,* as he did the children of *Israel* in divers manners, (*Deut. 8. 2. &c.*) some of us sharply, before the late civil Wars, and in the time of the Wars with losses and prosperity. Plainly, he hath tried us very variously, with adversity, and prosperity, and adversity; and we have dealt with him as the *Israelites* did, *Psal. 95. 9, 10, 11. proved and tempted him, and do still tempt him, with our sins;* notwithstanding we have seen the great and strange works which he hath wrought for us, and against us. He hath drawn us (with cords of love) and we have not been drawn; and driven us (with Rods) and we have not been driven; purged us, and we have not been purged, *Ezek. 24. 13.* and humbled us, and we have not been humbled. We have not humbled our selves as we ought to have done, but are (many of us) haughty and high-minded, jolly and joecund, followers of new and gaudy fashions. We do adorn and trim our bodies and houses with things too fine, and too costly. Can this be without Rebellion; which is as the sin of *Witchcraft*? and without stubbornness, which is as *Iniquity* and *Idolatry*? (*2 Sam. 15. 22.*) or without despising the chastening of the Lord? *Prov. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 5.* What? not learn obedience by the sore things which we suffer? Why, it was a foul fault in *Israel*, to put far away an evil day which was not yet come upon them, *Amos 6. 3.* What is it then in us, to carry our selves, as if it were very far from us, when not only an evil day is actually upon us, but also we have just cause to think, some men will endeavour to
- 78 make it much sorer, and more terrible than it is? But, Oh, what hath already been done (with God's permission) at *London*, since they who above all others, should have stood in the gap, and taken pains to make up the hedge, have disfigured themselves! O Lord God, what will become of us?

15. Our iniquity is *greatly* *greatened* by partaking of other mens sins.

For,

1. As it is a sin to command, or counsel, or hire, or request, or seek by threatnings, or sharp words, or promises, and fair words, to draw or drive any manner of person to do any unlawful work, or to speak any unlawful word, or to omit any part of his duty, so, if the party so tempted, shall yield to the Temptation, then he who hath by any such ways prevailed with him, or shall abet, maintain, or countenance a man in any sin, is accessory to the sin which is committed, and partaker of it with the personal Actor of it.

2. If a man doth use *his Christian liberty unseasonably*, whereby his Christian Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak, he is partaker of his Brothers sin, *Rom. 14. 21, 22.*

3. If we do not instruct, counsel, admonish, reprove, and correct and punish others as far as we are bound in duty, to use those means to work them out of their sins, or to keep them from falling into sin; then we are guilty of the sins wherein they are lying, or whereinto they fall, and the Omission of some of these duties made the Children of *Israel* accessory to the Theft of *Achan*, and cost the lives of six and thirty of them, *Josh. 7. 1, 2, 3, 4 5. & 22. 20.*

4. We are partakers of other mens, not only by being evil examples to them, but also by not being good examples to them. And, O how often do we trespass in the three last of these wayes, especially in the last of all!

Yet give me leave, to speak somewhat more to you of *some Gospel-matters.*

Many Professors, some unregenerate, and some (I believe) regenerate, do not make such use as they ought, of the Doctrine, Commandments, Promises and *threatnings* of the Gospel.

1. They do not duly consider them, and what use they ought to make of them, *2 Tim. 2. 7. Psal. 119. 11.*

2. They do not endeavour and stir up themselves *with due diligence*, to believe the Doctrine, Commandments, Promises, and Threats of the Gospel, and to believe in *Jesus Christ*, *Mark 1. 15. John 3. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 36. 1 Tim. 1. 15. (2 Pet. 1. 17.) 1 John 5. 10. Dew. 18. 15. &c. Acts 3. 22, 23.*

3. Nor mourn and grieve in relation to their sins, *Mat. 3. 2. Mark 1. 15. Acts 2. 38. & 3. 19. & 17. 30. & 26. 18, 20.*

4. Nor turn from their sins, *Isa. 2. Acts 3. 19.*

5. Nor bring forth fruits deserving the name and credit of amendment of life, *Mat. 3. 8. Tit. 2. 11, 12. Acts 26. 18, 20. or else,*

1. Nor

1. Nocturn from their sins universally and thoroughly; *Ezek. 18. 28, 30, 31, 19, 21, 22, 14. &c.* 2. And turn unto the Lord, *Jer. 3. 1. and 4. 1. Joel 2. 12, 13. Acts 16. 18.* 3. Or else not believe the Gospel-promises and Threats, and in *Jesus Christ with a strong faith, and the whole heart, Rom. 10. 10. Acts 8. 37. (1 John 5. 13.)* 4. Or not amend their ways, and mourn for their sins according to God, *2 Cor. 7. 9, 10.* upon Gospel grounds and Motives, in regard of Gods love, and free-grace and mercy toward them, and Gods promises and their expectation of great matters from him hereafter, *1 John 3. 19. 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. & 6. 17, 18.* with *7. 1.* and because by their sins they have polluted Gods name, and grieved his holy spirit, and disgraced his Gospel, &c. but repented and put away their sins only to escape Gods wrath, (which is but self-love) and not for Gospel ends also; viz. for God, *Rom. 11. 36. Prov. 16. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Jam. 4. 3.* very many of us do not duly consider, how great a sin it is, not to come by faith unto *Jesus Christ*, that we may have life, *John 5. 40.* Who will in no wise cast out him who cometh unto him, *John 6. 37.* and how great the difference is before God, between doing, what we do thoroughly, and doing by halves, and between doing upon Gospel-grounds, and for all Gospel-ends, and doing for our own ends only: which greater error, it will be our wisdom to amend thoroughly, and to *Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and we perish from the way, if his wrath be kindled but a little*, *Psal. 2. 12.* And thus far of the sixth part of my proof.

80 Part. 7. 1. There are five sins of Professors, whereof I shall here speak together (notwithstanding I have already spoken of some of them) because they be so common.

1. Many Professors, Ministers and others, do neglect their Families, not bestowing time and pains in educating and training up their children and servants in the way where in they should go, *Prov. 23. 6.* (as if they did believe the Devils old saying, *A young Saint, and an old Devil.*) O how careless many Professors be, of preparing those who shall survive them, to hold forth the name of Christ in a holy manner, to his honour and the credit of his Gospel!

2. Many Professors do suffer very much forby, vain, idle, foolish, corrupt communication, not tending to edification, to proceed out of their mouths.

3. Many Professors do profane and mispend much of the holy Sabbath. For which sin and Idolatry especially, (as the Jews about two hundred years since have said) the Lord did reject their Fore-fathers; so that (as they then said) they could not take the Christians of those days

to be the servants of the true *Messias*, because they did live in those two sins.

4. Many Professors be so full of pride under this Dispensation, that by reason of it and the fruits of it, men of knowledge can hardly get charity enough, to think there is any fear of God before their eyes.

5. It is a common thing with Professors, to be silent at the sins one of another. Which five things joyned together, do amount to a foul heap of iniquity.

Part. 8. I come now to some down-right Reasons for this my belief, that the greatest cause of the afflictions peculiar to Professors, and the greatest impediment of their prayers for some good things expedient for them, is the sins and iniquities of Professors.

R. 1. And first, Gods Kingdom, Wisdom, and Power being such as it is, and all mens hearts and times being in his hand, *Prov. 21. 1. Psal. 31. 15.* he might have established our King in all his Dominions, and yet given us favour with him and his Parliaments (as *Gen. 39. 4, 5, 6, 21, 22, 23. Sc Dan. 1. 6.*) and bowed their hearts, to confirm us in the places which we held 1659. with the means and liberty which we then enjoyed (excepting the Kings revenue and some high Offices.) Neither hath it been at any time such a hard thing for God, to better our Estates, instead whereof, notwithstanding *Col. 3. 12* to his children, which passeth knowledge, *Eph. 3. 19* and that the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much with him, *Jam. 5. 16. &c.* yet, it hath pleased him, in his infinite wisdom, to afflict Professors in divers kinds, wherein he hath not afflicted others; yea, to afflict us in our worldly Estates, and to encrease the means of growing rich to others; yea, to augment the worldly Estates of others by diminishing ours, to deprive us of our Benefices, Offices, and Preferments, to make room for others: yea, ye know, that since 1659. notwithstanding we have carryed our selves, not seditiously, but peaceably and quietly, yet our condition is by degrees and steps grown from good to bad, and from bad to worse. Which forty changes of our condition, to what others may make a shift, to impute them, I know not; but, in my judgment, they are to be ascribed to our sins, who are called Professors, of whom (I believe) many are not yet born again, and many Sons and Daughters have and do by their sins provoke our heavenly Father, to chastise and correct them.

For R. 1. Although the Lord scourgeth every Son (and Daughter) whom he receiveth, *Prov. 3. 12. Heb. 12. 6.* yet he doth not afflict, or grieve, so much as one man or woman meeterly for his pleasure, *Lam. 3. 33.* and when he judgeth and afflicteth any of his children, his judgements

ments are right; he afflicts them in faithfulness, *Psal.* 119. 57. because (according to his just and wise Method of making men meet to partake of the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Col.* 1. 12, 13.) there is (as *Peter* calls it, *1 Pet.* 1. 6.) need, either because they be not duly careful and diligent, to find out their sins, or because they be so far from hating sin as they ought, as not to be thoroughly careful to humble themselves for and to cease from some of those sins whereof they be guilty (*Exod.* 34. 6, 7.) or else for that they do not use due care and diligence to reach and attain some other end which they ought to seek (if this clause doth contain any thing which the former clauses do not.)

84 R. 2. A sinful agreement between Professors. About forty years since, if the Commonalty did mis-behave themselves, and the *Magi- strates* did not punish them for it, nor the *Ministers* reprove them for it; this, *they who were taught of God*, did look on, as a fore-runner of Gods wrath, even as a sign, that it was near at hand. The reason of which opinion must of necessity be this, that such a *conspiracy* is too like, *Jer.* 5. 30, 31. and doth provoke the *LORD* of Hosts unto great wrath, (*Abs* 5. 9.) Which if it be true, (as, I believe, it is) then we may well receive this for a truth, that the nearer we Professors come to such a hellish consent, the more probable it is, that the wrath of God will seize upon us, if it be not already upon us: and, if it be, that this our consent hath brought it upon us, or, at least, as much of it as is peculiar to us. And the very truth is, the sinful agreement which is between many of us, is too like such a *conspiracy* as the holy Prophet *Jeremy* in that Chapter, *ver.* 30. calls a wonderful and horrible thing. For,

85 1. In the time of the Interruption, I took notice wherein *O. Cromwel* and our *Parliaments, Armies, Committees, Commissioners, and Assembly of Divines*, and particular persons, *Round-heads*, &c. did miss the right, and did what they ought not to have done; among other things, over-recompensing their members for their losses [one Father and Son (as I have heard) with 5000 *l.* for the (pure) loss of about or less than 5 *l.*].

2. Since that time the Covetousness, Pride, and Iniquity of many Professors hath been very considerable.

1. Whereof hath been no small part, the *Fashionmonging* of Professors, and particularly, the gay *Lady-like attire and ornaments of shop-keeping women in London*. But it is said concerning them, that *London* doth allow, what other Towns do not. It may be so: howsoever, and although *London hath been my Benefactor*, yet I shall not justify the

proudest of the *Londoners* in taking an Ell, yea, or half an Ell, or a quarter of an Ell, when they be allowed but an inch, especially at such a time of *Adversity* as this is. I had rather they would consider seriously concerning *Apparel and Ornaments*, that which is written by *Paul*, *1 Tim.* 2. 9, 10. and by *Peter*, *1 Pet.* 3. 3, 4, 5. praying and taking good heed, lest they be weighed in the ballances and found wanting, (*Dan.* 5. 27.) it may be to be nothing, (*Gal.* 6. 3.) lest *London* be reduced to the state of some other Cities, and that they fare as was prophesied, *Zeph.* 1. 8. & *Es.* 3. 17. to the 24.

2. The children and servants of many religious Families, being rude, profane, and irreligious, the Heads of such Families, who have authority over them, (somewhat like that of Magistrates and Ministers over the members of several Families) do not use their authority in instructing, rebuking, and correcting them for their disorderly behaviour.

3. As some Conforming Ministers be godly, so I believe some Non-conforming Ministers be altogether destitute of true godliness.

4. Whereas Ministers ought to be an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in spirit, in faith, in purity, *1 Tim.* 4. 12. and a pattern of good works; instead thereof (according to my hearing, and in part, seeing) some Ministers have been, and some are little less than patterns and examples of Coverousness, Pride, and Vanity. *London Ministers* of great means heretofore did pay Country Ministers for preaching for them, with leaning on their Velvet Cushions. One Minister being offered 100 *l.* to preach one Sermon weekly, said, that was but a journey-mans wages. Another Minister, being a Non-conformist, and too like the rich men in *Jam.* 5. 1, 2, 3. hath taken such a large allowance for himself and his four or five Daughters, of the worldly wealth which his Master hath committed to him, as his Steward to dispose to fit ends, that he gives them for their portions 1000 *l.* a piece, together with Jewels in their ears, and Bracelets of Pearl on their necks. According to Mr. Foxleys judgment and mine, it is not lawful for a man to say, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?* *Mat.* 10. 15. or, *to keep what I will of my own for them of my own Family?* Not so. Friends, every man ought to remember, that all that is in the Heaven and in the Earth is Gods, *2 Chron.* 29. 11, 14. and that he is but Gods Steward over the good things which he possesseth, and that it is required in him, that he be found faithful in using and disposing of them, wherein he ought to have great respect (if I may so speak) to the advantage of the owner, and to the welfare of his people, and not to

bestow too much on himself and his own Children, to raise them high in the world, *Agar* did pray unto God, to feed him *with food convenient for him*, Prov. 30. 8. But it is said, this man hath great Friends.

A. 1. It may be so: (some Preachers would receive none or almost none but rich persons into their Congregations, *Jam.* 2. 1. to 9.) But hath he shewn himself *a true and faithful Friend to them concerning their spiritual states and sins*? Jer. 23. 18. For some Preachers do daub with untempered mortar, *Ezek.* 13. 10. Howsoever, I am confident, God doth not allow *such a Minister*, to keep so much, for his own wages, especially at such a time as this, when *so many Saints have need of things necessary for the body*, 1 John 3. 17, 5. But what should I say to the Non-conforming Ministers that wear *Perruques* (or *Perruigs*) (it may be, made of the hair of a Thief and Whore) or too long hair (as many do) and generally of such as are *adorned like Gallants*? Even this, that these things ought not so to be; (*Jam.* 3. 10.) and that, if they had had much fellowship in the Gospel with Saint Paul, he would have taught them to be *ashamed* of such fashions, 1 Cor. 11. 14, and that, if they had been professors, when old Mr. Dod would not yield to the Lord *Sayer* desire, to confer with him concerning Religion, till he had cut his hair shorter, some of them would have looked on such fashions as *Puritans* in those days did, viz. as suitable to *Ruffians and Swaggers*. But some of them have conformed to the world in these things (like the *Jesuites* in the time of Queen *Elizabeth*) that they might not be known or suspected to be Ministers. Did some subtle Devil teach them, to adde this unfit practise to their sinful sinnes at the like sinful excess of others before God did punish the City of London for it, and the rest of its sins with the Pestilence, or did *Belshazzar* himself (2 Tim. 2. 26.) teach it them, when they ought to have rebuked their hearers sharply for not hearing that *severe scourge*, and him who appointed it? I had almost said, for despising the Lords chastening, Prov. 3. 11. Is this an effect of the spirit of life from God his trying into the two Witnesses, or their standing upon their feet? Rev. 11. 11, or a work of the spirit of destruction rather? Why, Brethren, had it not been lawful and fitter for you, to have contented your selves in all places with such *modest Apparel*, (2 Tim. 2. 9.) whence strangers would have taken occasion to look on you as Country Farmers, or mean shop-keepers, or of some other calling whereinto it is now lawful for you to enter? Heb. 11. 37, 38. Could no garb serve the turn, but such as would make you seem, what it is *unlawful for you to be, or to seem to be*? (Ruffians and swaggers.) But it may be, ye have begun to lay aside these *Debonestaments*, at least since ye hoped, there would be no need of them.

6. As for Societies formally joyned together by a special Covenant, (as it they would do singular things) what I have observed and heard, cannot make me believe, that near all their Members or Rulers do, (in admitting and refusing, and instructing, admonishing, reprov-
ing, and watching over one another) keep close to the word of God and their own Discipline, and take due care to make their Families like little Churches. And Mr. H. Peters in his Sermon preached in Newgate after his condemnation, viz. Octob. 14. 1660. There hath been (quoth he) marvellous miscarriages amongst Saints in their Church-relations. So he verbatim.

7. As for the duty of reprov-
ing it is greatly neglected in both conference and Preaching. 8. Even many of those Ministers that are esteemed godly, do so affect and hunt after curious and dainty words, and ornate expressions, as that they do use in preaching and praying, as such, many that are strange, obscure, and dark, and hard to be understood (1 Cor. 14. 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 19.) (it may be out of pride and vain glory, and to please, and to be highly esteemed of men and women, and despising language easie to be understood (such as God hath taught me to use as rustical :) and hence it is, that their preaching is not so good for the use of edifying, Eph. 4. 29. peradventure the more profitable to the Preachers, as to the maintenance of their bodies, but not so good to the use of edifying the Hearers spiritually. 9. Some do not duly study and consider their Hearers, so as to know them, (Jer. 8. 6.) and so know not; what kind of Sermons, (for matter and manner) be most expedient for them. Some do bestow too little time and study on their Sermons, hindred by other less necessary studies and works; it may be studying and hunting after pleasing words, rather, and more than profitable matter; it may be hindred by loitering and idleness. 10. Some such Ministers, (it may be) do look on the business of meddling with Professors sins, as like the taking of a shrewd Dog by the ears, (Prov. 26. 17.) or worse; some (peradventure) fear the issue of displeasing them carnally: however it cometh to pass; they do not speak unto those Professors, with whom they have fellowship, concerning their sins, so particularly, plainly, home, pressing and faithfully, as they ought to speak: Prov. 20. 6. One Non-conforming Minister in his Sermon at Bristow, speaks of naked breasts. It may be, desiring to have what he spake, applied against other devil-taught fashions, not knowing, that naked breasts did take notes of Sermons. Another in his Sermon speaks of sins under the name of the devils Dainties; yet names no sin at all in particular, but oppression. Why did he not leave out that also, and particularize the worshipping of stocks and stones only, that

all who heard him, might be the more confident, he did not mean any of their sins! One in his Sermon saith of *Hair*, that if it be any thing (or ever so little) longer, than the Scripture allows of, it is a sin. Understanding men might speak more than this, &c. 1 Cor. 11. 14. Another in his Sermon saith, *This Dispensation calls on us, to be more spiritual and heavenly.* I would have a Preacher trust in God, and cry with the throat; (if he be able) to lift up his voice like a Trumpet, and to shew those who have gotten the name of *Phanaticks*, their sins and transgressions, and that plainly, &c. I would have him say, Brethren and Sisters, it is high time for us, to reform our conversation universally, without any exception or limitation, without any so far and so far, to change very much of our behaviour. 2. This dispensation cries unto us, to be less carnal, and less sensual, and less earthly minded; to be spiritually minded, and more tractable; to throw away with a holy abhorrence and detestation, our covetousness and worldliness, our immoderate sparing, our excessive spending, our voluptuousness, and love of pleasure and ease, our pride, ostentation, ambition, vanity, vain glory, envy, curiosity, fashionmonging, carnal mirth and jollity, foolish, vain, idle and frothy communication, bitter and unseemly jests, frolics and boyish toying, and the despising of our heavenly Father's chastenings, Prov. 3. 11. Num. 12. 14, 15. naming the sins of Professors punctually. [I would have a Preacher do more than all this.]

- 88 R. 3. Thirdly, whereas that which most of us look on, as the worst of our afflictions, is not payments of money for the use of our King, &c. but want of liberty and peace, and of a well-grounded assurance of liberty and peace: Are we without these, because we ask them not? No, undoubtedly, we have prayed for liberty and peace oft, and, it may be some of us, for an assurance of it. And to whom would our liberty and peace be beneficial? To us, or to others? Ye will say, to us, and some of you; that it would be so in regard of our bodies, purses and souls. Some of you also will peradventure be ready to add. that of the rest, to some it would be a pecuniary loss, and to two or three an eye-sore, an ear-sore, and a heart-sore, even vexation of spirit. Which if it be true, as I think, it is; whose sins then, think you, have deprived us of our liberty and peace, and kept it so long from us? Our own sins, to whom it would be a considerable part of our happiness, or theirs, to whom it would be no gain at all, and to some among them a purse-loss, and to some grief of mind? can any think, the sins of others, or the sins of the Nation in general? V. rily, what shall some men of much wit make to entertain a foolish conceit, I know not: but for my own part, I cannot hold back my mind from attrib-

buting our want of liberty and peace to our own sins, to whom it would be a great favour and benefit, rather than to the sins of *Heathens, Mahometans, Jews, or Papists*, or of the whole Nation, or of any part of the Nation, other than our selves, because it would be unprofitable to them.

6. Now for the *sixth Point*; *What have we done, to better our estates, or to obtain of God, to better them?* 90

A. We have not rebelled, *insurrected* or *seditioned* with *Venner*. We have kept up our forms of Godliness; prayed by Families, and Members of divers Families jointly, and *many of us apart secretly*; prayed with Fasting, prayed (all our prayers put together) very many prayers; some of us *very elegant, fine, and dainty prayers*, [too ornate, trim, curious, quaint, and fine prayers] as if they had been petitioning the Emperor Julius Cæsar; (1 Cor. 2. 1, 2, 3, 13.) and many of us, (some of mean parts) have uttered long prayers, and some have prayed too long prayers (too long for Courts of earthly Princes) as if they hoped to overcome the infinitely wise God with their verbosity and much talking; (Eccl. 5. 1, 2, 3.) Mat. 6. 7, 8. &c. v. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.) or as if they did lengthen and stretch out their prayers, to make the younger sort and servants weary of Religion before they know what it is. (Mat. 23. 14. Mar. 12. 4. Luke 20. 47. Eccl. 7. 14.) We have used some other holy Ordinances, we have Preached, prayed and fasted eight or nine hours together; [it may be bowing down our heads as Bulrushes, Isa. 58. 5.] We have prayed to him who is All-sufficient, Gen. 17. 1. and in whose hand all mens hearts are, Prov. 21. 1. And what have we asked of him? Liberty and freedom from Troubles, and an end of this time of *Satans* great wrath, &c. And for our Rulers we have asked heavenly wisdom, to take the best course that can be taken, for their spiritual welfare and everlasting felicity. And some of us, it may be, have added something to their forms of Godliness, prayed somewhat oftner. But as for the *visible* 91
reforming of our ways according to the word of God, that our sins may not hinder our prayers, I cannot say, I know, That a considerable number of us have in that way shewn themselves duly sensible of their own and their brethrens sufferings, and dangers, and sins, or that our conference, or talking, when we meet together, is much bettered.

7. For the *seventh Point*; As Fishermen use to draw up their nets 92
and fishing-hooks, to see, whether they have caught any Fish, and if need be, to amend the meshes of their Nets, and to bait their Fishing-hooks with fresh worms, &c. So we ought to consider the issue and events of the *Midweekes* which we have used for the bettering of

our estates, and for one of the events, the *return of our Prayers*, what we have gained by them; that, if there be cause, we may use the best diligence we can, *to amend our prayers*. Now as to this particular, it may be, we have prevailed, in some measure for some Governours; but as for our selves, as many of us have enjoyed more *liberty and peace* than some of our Brethren, (for which, I fear, *we have not been duly thankful* to our heavenly Father, nor made such use of our liberty unto the promoting of Christ's interest, and the welfare of his people, as we ought to have done:)(*Jam. 4. 3.*) so none of the Plows or Gears are broken, *Psal. 129. 3, 4.* So many Summers and Harvests are past, and there is not a general and full deliverance; yea, the causes of our dangers and fears are augmented: at length (so many of) our Ministers must bid farewell to Cities and Corporations. And thus much of the seventh particular which we ought to consider.

- 93 8. *In the eighth place*, It ye desire to know, why God hath not heard our prayers to the full, and put an end to our sufferings, It is, because he hath not yet attained all those ends which he hath aimed at, and doth yet aim at, in afflicting us. See *Marg. 25.* For Professors have not yet thoroughly believed, and feelingly acknowledged, and duly considered, his Kingdom, and Power, and Providence, and the *threatnings of his Law and Gospel*, and the Judgment to come, and learned to fear God *in regard of small sins*. They have not duly studied and endeavoured to be sensible of the comforts and benefits, and use of true grace, and of the assurance of God's fatherly love, and of the evils of being without those good things, nor constantly and seriously used all God's means to get them, nor duly sought his mercy and favour in prosperity and adversity, nor made such use as they ought, of their liberty, peace, prosperity and opportunities for their own spiritual good, and the good of others, especially of God's people. They have not accomplished a diligent search to find out all their sins, old, forgotten, secret, &c. nor humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God for them, with godly, inward and deep sorrow and mourning, and so particularly as they ought to have done, nor cast *all their pride* and spiritual filthiness out of their hearts, and ceased to do evil, and learned to do, each *man and woman*, his and her whole duty, nor *duly endeavoured*, without exceptions and reservations, so to do. They have not, with due care and diligence, tried their graces and spiritual gifts, and endeavoured to know their election of God, and to grow in all graces, especially Faith, Hope, Humility and Meekness (to bear the wrath of God, and rage of men, with a quiet spirit) and in spiritual gifts, and to be rooted and established in

Jesus Christ the Lord, and in the knowledge and love of his Truths, and invincibly resolved to cleave in love to him and them for ever: They have trusted in themselves, and in the world, expecting (without any good cause) favour and peace from it. Under crosses and being in trouble, they have not shewn themselves patient and calm-spirited, and so valiant for Christ and his Truths, as they ought to have been; some not at all putting their seals to the Truths and Righteousnesses of the Gospel, some complying with the world basely. They have not been duly thankful to God for their liberty and peace, and the comforts, helps and deliverances which he hath vouchsafed them in distresses and dangers, nor prayed and given thanks for one anothers comforts under the Cross, deliverances and peace; at least, as they ought to have done, and should have done, if we had been knit together with brotherly love, *Col. 2. 2.* They have not exercised and shewn forth their graces and spiritual gifts as they should have done; for the encreasing of them and the honour of Christ, especially their Faith, Zeal for God and his people, Humility and Patience. They have not prayed mightily for the destruction of *Babylon*, and of the Kingdom of Antichrist. They have not used all due diligence, to find and know *all* the naughty things which are in their hearts, nor taken due care to know, which of those he hath and doth most favour, and endeavoured very seriously to beat it down. My meaning is, that, of the said sins and faults, some Professors be guilty of these, and some of those, and *some of many*. (The truth is, Professors be so faulty in their Hair and the Apparel, and the Ornaments of the body, and concerning other matters, that it is a very difficult thing for us Ministers (the Lord be merciful to us) to learn, how to do our duty in seeking to reform them.)

9. So that in the ninth and last place, if we would know, what it 94 concerns us to do towards the bettering of our estates; the way is, every Professor to amend thoroughly of the sins and faults before mentioned, as many as he himself is guilty of, and to perform every duty which is contrary to any of them.

But to speak more fully and more plainly concerning, at least, some matters, and concerning some not before spoken of: First, we may do well to consider what enemies the true Religion hath on this side, and beyond the Seas, and that now, some think, they have a Plot to destroy it universally; and what hath been done of late at Sea and at home, what hath befallen *London, Norwich, Colchester, Portsmouth, &c.* and the distress and dangers, wherein we yet are, and what signs we see in Heaven or on earth, &c. of our liberty and peace hereafter. Ye

also

also know there was a time, when *there was no remedy*, 2 Chron. 36. 16. The consideration whereof (without any more words) should be of force enough to move us (unless we be content to suffer with *Gedaliah the son of Ahikam*, Jer. 40. with 41.) to put away our folly and negligence, and to use *all lawful and fit* addresses unto the higher Powers, whereby to better our condition, especially to prevail with God, to better it, (*Neh. 2. 17. Exod. 10. 7. Prov. 6. 6. & 12. 24. Heb. 2. 3.*)

2. I would not have you think, that the continuance of our forms of godliness, (how specious and large soever they be) will serve the turn. For we have used them a long time already, and our estate is such as I have told you. Neither do I think, that the amplifying of our forms would do it. For in my younger years, when some godly persons in and neer *Shrewsbury* did enter into a Resolution, to enlarge their Forms) (to pray oftner than formerly, to fast oftner, and to win others to do the like: whereof (as I in those dayes heard) a godly Ministers Wife said, *They had found out a way to kill the Devil*. Yet, the praises, of Professors suitable to that Resolution, did not so much as keep the Devil from rising higher and higher. To what should we impute this, rather than to our sinful silence at the aberrations one of another, and suffering sin one upon another (our not instructing, admonishing, reprovings, and encouraging, and giving good counsel one to another) and the Elder Professors not being good Examples to the Younger; I say, we should attribute the prevailing of *Satan* contrary to our prayers, rather than to these and the rest of our sins whereof we had not duly repented, and taken due care to forsake (2 Cor. 12. 20. 31.) This sinful and pernicious silence was too common in those dayes, as it is in these, notwithstanding it is contrary to the true meaning of the special Covenant which hath been entered.

96 Beloved Friends, it hath been, and is one of the too common faults of Professors, Ministers and others, to receive or let pass, as true Christians, all that cease from gross sins, hear Gods word, keep up Gods worship in their Families, and use to go to meetings; which yet is but a form of godliness, and, without a more full reformation of our wayes, no better than a bribe offered to the judge of all the earth, to blind his eyes or stop his mouth, or turn back his hands from striking us; and the great God, who without respect of persons, judgeth according to every mans work [even his own children, 1 Pet. 1. 17.] he will take no Bribes, Deut. 16. 19.) 2. So, that it concerns us, (so learn how) to open our eyes, to see our sins, both open and secret, and particularly the iniquity of our holy things. And first, for the defects and faults of our Prayers.

6. Some of us (I believe many of us) have no grace at all, Marg. 123, 116, 127, 128. and therefore do pray out of Christ and without (Christ (John 15. 5.) without faith, without humility, (Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.) without repentance, without the love of God, without godly fear, &c. (Heb. 12. 28.) and therefore also, when they pray, they do regard iniquity in their hearts, Psal. 66. 16. and pray, without due respect to God and his Church, Jam. 4. 3. Hof. 10. 1.

7. I believe, concerning many regenerate persons, that unbelief, and pride do prevail much in their prayers; that they do oft come short of serving God in their prayers with reverence and godly fear, Heb. 12. 28. and oft come near that which David in Psal. 66. 18. calls the regarding of iniquity in their hearts, (which is when a man will keep this or that sin, whether God will bear his prayers or not.) I do also fear, that many a godly man prays unto God now and then, in words, to do this or that for his Church, whilst, with his heart, he aims at his own good only, without due respect to Gods honour, and the well-being of his Church; which I conceive, to be the iniquity spoken of Jam. 4. 3. For whatsoever a man asks of God immediately for himself, he ought to ask for God also, viz. to the end he may be the more willing, or the more able, or have the more opportunities to promote Christs interest, or to some such end. For all things are, as of God; and through God, so also for God, Rom. 11. 36. So that, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we ought to do all to his glory, 1 Cor. 10. 31. And, all things do work together for good to them who love God, Rom. 8. 28. so we ought in most of our Petitions for our selves (if not in all) to aim at the good of those who love God. I think so.

Secondly, as to our Fasts: they are (if as many of us use them) 98

1. Too like a sudden Land-flood, which is quickly gone into the River, and the ground anon after, almost as dry as at the beginning of the storm. For so the shows which some make at Fasts, of sorrow and mourning, are soon turned into Feasting carnal jollity (Jam. 4. 9) and uncommunication.

2. So that, I fear, they be too like the penances and scourges of (some) Papists, which they use to the flesh, Gal. 5. 13.

But, to speak more generally, many of us in respect of our forms of 99 godliness, are too like the Jews in Es. 58. who did seek God (after their manner) daily and ask of him (with their mouths) the Ordinances of Justice, and afflict their souls with fasting, bowing down their heads as Bulrushes, and spreading sackcloth and ashes under them, and make a show of delighting to know Gods wayes, and in approaching unto God, all which did not prevail with God to ease them of their grievances.

and afflictions, ver. 3. And why? even, because they did not forsake
 their sinful practises, but went on still in them, Psal. 68. 21. And hence
 it is, that the Lord 1. Commands the Prophet, to cry aloud, to lift up
 his voice like a Trumpet, and to shew them their sins and transgressions,
 and that ver. 3. he spreads before them a particular of their Trespas-
 ses, and signifies to them, that it is a foolish and fond thing for them, to
 think, that it is enough for them to afflict themselves (now and then) for a
 day, (and there's an end of the business) 1 Tim. 4. 8. as if God would
 approve and accept of Fasts; and hear Prayers, when they be not
 joyned with sincere repentance and amendment of life; as also he men-
 tions some of the most considerable sins of the Jews at that time, as sinning to
 insisted on: which I believe, is the cause why David, Pl. 24. 4. mentioneth
 the lifting up of the soul unto vanity and swearing deceitfully, and why Mic.
 ch. 6. 8. mentioneth doing justly, and loving mercy, and humbling our selves
 to walk with God; or walking humbly with God. O that our Preachers at
 time would be perswaded to imitate them, viz. to tell them who hear
 them preach, punctually and plainly of the most considerable of their iniqui-
 ties, and, if doing so will not cause them to reform all their ways
 speedily, then to cry aloud unto them, and to deal faithfully and plain-
 ly with them concerning their sins and abominations, (and not to cease
 from reproving, untill they have drawn or driven them out of all their in-
 101 warrantable practises, (Lev. 19. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 2. as Acts 12. 5.) For
 Mic. 6. 6; 7. the graceless man is represented, as it were, acting his
 part upon a stage; and his business is, to please God, and to obtain
 pardon of his sins, and to that end, to bestow somewhat on God.
 Neither is he altogether empty of good words; he calls him whole
 favour he seeks, JEHOVAH, twice, and the most high God, and speaks
 of bowing himself before him, and of being at great cost with him,
 of burnt-offerings, thousands of Rams; ten thousands of Rivers of Oil, yea,
 giving his first born for the sin of his soul, (which is more than much money
 given to godly Preachers;) but not one word of leaving his sins, and doing
 his duty. And therefore it is, that he who answers him, shews him
 what is good [in the sight of the LORD] and what he requires of him,
 namely, to do justly, and to love mercy, and to humble himself to walk
 with his God. So that this is, as a Touch-stone to Gold, the abandoning of
 all our sins; and the cleansing of all our ways according to the Rules
 of God's word: which a godless man is not thoroughly content to do,
 but would rather buy a pardon with one or two of his Children: than
 to part with all his sins and the sweet fruits of them. Which kind of lib-
 eral dealing with God, how unacceptable it is to him, and how unavail-
 able the holy Ordinances which he hath commanded, be with him

without reformation of our wayes, ye may also see (if ye have hearts to understand) in *Es.* 1. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. *Es.* 66. 3, 4. and *Am.* 5. 21, 22, 23, 24. (I pray, read and consider seriously all these *Verdes*) Friends I may well speak unto many of you (in another *102* *voice*) as the *LORD* speaks to his people, *Es.* 58. 6. of letting the oppressed go free. For ye do oppress some of the Truths which ye have received into your minds, but not the love of them into your hearts. Ye do hold them (as those *Rom.* 1. 18.) in unrighteousness; ye do keep them in prison. I beseech you, let them all walk at liberty; let them prevail in your words and deeds: practice them in your houses, in your shops, in the streets; and, as there is occasion, in all places and companies; behave your selves according to those truths which ye know constantly. Without this, as ye may desire and not obtain, because ye *103* ask not; so ye may ask and not receive, because ye ask amiss, *1am.* 5. 7. Yea, without this Reformation, ye may use all the holy Ordinances of God externally and that constantly, and neither your person, nor your services be accepted with God. For God will not receive bribes. I cannot tell you of this too oft, (*Phil.* 3. 1.)

But fourthly, to speak somewhat more punctually,
1. Say with thy heart, If the King of Saints be with us, why are we thus? *104* For the fault is not in God; he is rich in grace, and abundant in goodness and truth, *Exod.* 34. 6. and waiteth that he may be gracious, *Es.* 30. 18. nor in high Priests Intercession; the father heareth him always: and as for his protecting of us, all power is given to him in Heaven and in Earth, *Mat.* 28. 18. Why then are not the Plowmen cut aunder, or the Plows thrown to the hedge? Why are we still under the rods of the Almighty? Surely the fault is in us; the cause is our sins; it is by reason of our sins.

2. Consider, who they were, that, when they were imprisoned, said, we are verily guilty concerning our Brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: therefore is this distress upon us, *Gen.* 41. 21, 22. and what woman, when her Son was dead, said unto Elias, Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? *2 King.* 17. 17, 18. and who said unto the Mariagers, *Jon.* 1. 12. I know, that for my sake this tempest is upon you; and who, when our Saviour told his Apostles, one of them would betray him, said, Lord, is it I? And who asked that question last, That was Judas, *Mat.* 26. 21, 22, 25. Consider, I say these persons, and thy self; what hand thou hast had in pulling down wrath on the Nation, or on professors, *Plal.* 19, 22, 23. and beg very earnestly of God, to direct thee so judge rightly of this matter,

105 3. Consider, whether thou beest one of them, that did heretofore (as many Professors did) *abuse* and not make such use as they ought to have done of their Liberty, Peace, Means, Authority, and opportunities of doing God and his people service; and whether thou be one of them, who in the time of their prosperity did *not consider, pity, and show favour to the sufferers of that time, especially the conscientious ones*, as far forth as they were in duty bound so to do. For it is probable, God will chastise us for abusing and not making aright use of his blessings, by depriving us of them.

106 4. Because we have not Rules by which in all cases to discern clearly, for what sins we are corrected; therefore I counsel thee, to search thy heart and ways all over, and to call to mind and consider thy behaviour, even from thy Childhood, and that very diligently: to find out the several kinds of sin wherein thou hast trespassed, and thy trespasses in them, together with their aggravations, as particularly and fully as thou canst; making use in this search of the holy Scriptures, especially *Psal. 51. 5. Eccl. 3. 16. to the end, Ezek. 23. Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Tit. 1. 15. Adw. 5. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 28, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 44. & 15. 19. Mark 7. 21, 22. Rom. 1. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. 1 Cor. 5. 8. & 6. 9, 10. & 11. 14. 2 Cor. 10. 21. Gal. 5. 19-20, 21, 22, 23, 24. Eph. 4. 25, 26, 29, 31, 32. & 5. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 18, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28, 29. Phil. 2. 3, 4, 5. &c. ver. 21. Col. 3. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20. & 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. 1 Thes. 5. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. 1 Tim. 2. 9, 10. & 6. 8, 9, 10, 11. 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Tit. 2. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Heb. 13. 16, 17, 18. Jam. 3. 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. & 4. 1 & 5. 16. 1 Pet. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10. 2 Pet. 2. 7, 8. 1 John 3. 38, 17. Rev. 2. 4, 5. & 3. 1, 2, 3, 15, 16, 17. & 21. 8. Rom. 12. 2. & 14. 21. 1 Cor. 13. Why not also of Byfields Catalogue of sins, or the like books, and of the exemplary behaviour of the best Professors, that thou conversest with? It may be, sometimes it would be wisdom in thee, to take their silence at thy words for a reproof of them. And be sure, because it is a very difficult thing for a man to understand his errors, (*Psal. 19. 12.*) to imitate Job, chap. 13. 23. requesting the God of knowledge, to make thee know and understand thy sins and transgressions.*

108 5. Consider thy sins together with the afflictions which God hath sent thee, either alone, or joyntly with others; (for so we are to understand the considering of our ways, Hagg. 1. 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11. and thinking on our ways, *Psal. 119. 59. viz. of considering our doings and the events of them*) and take good notice, that that Commandment in Hagg. 3. is repeated, and consider why it is repeated, which (I judge) is, because it highly concerns men, to consider their doings, and the suc-

cess of them, and that seriously (that they may *turn their feet unto Gods testimonies*, Psal. 119. 39.) and because many be so slow to consider them, &c.

6. I advise thee, as thou findest out thy sins, to confess them before 109 the Lord against thy self, and that thou hast walked contrary to him, and also, that he hath walked contrary to thee, and chastised thee, *Jer. 26. 40, 41. Lam. 3. 41. to 47.* and to humble thy self *under his mighty and correcting hand* for them, and as thou canst, for thy *unknown* sins also, (*Jam. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 6, 10. Psal. 19. 12.*) not too easily contenting thy self with any measure of sorrow for thy sins (yet not grieving so as to disable thy self for any service or business of any sort.) For sometimes men are not quickly cleansed from their iniquities, as those *Josh. 22. 17.* no nor duly contrite and humbled for them, as those *Jer. 43. 10.* And, I fear, this is the case of many of us Professors, even in this perillous time, and that many of us do not well understand our *sins of common life.*

7. *Accept of the punishment of thine iniquity*, Lev. 26. 41. and that 110 *with the whole heart*; thy mouth and heart really yielding and acknowledging, that our God *hath punished thee less, (O far less) than thy iniquities deserve*, (*Ezr. 9. 13.*)

8. And forsake and cease from all thy sins, resolve throughly, to strive seriously against them all, not excepting so much as one of them, no nor the *least and most profitable* of them. And do this with a holy hatred and detestation of them, *hating them for God*; because they be enemies to him, saying in thy heart, *Get ye hence, ye enemies of my God, get ye hence*, (*Es. 30. 32. Mat. 4. 10.*) And having once cast away thy sins, sin no more, lest *worse things* come unto thee, (*Job 5. 4.*) but walk in all the *Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord uprightly and blameless*; and among other duties.

1. Be really *thankful* to him, who is the Fountain of all good things, for extending his goodness to thee and *the rest of his people* in such and such matters, giving him hearty and humble thanks in the name of our Lord *Jesus Christ*. Col. 3. 15. Eph. 5. 20. especially for thy and their *liberty and peace.*

2. Let the love of *Christ* constrain thee to love him, because he dy- 111 ed for thee, *for that very end*; 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. To the uttermost of thy abilities, promote *his interest*, and, for his sake, his peoples happiness, by doing him and them, as many good services as thou canst.

3. *Misspend not time, but redeem time*, for Gods service and the soul, *because the dayes be evil*; Eph. 5. 17.

4. Take heed to thy wayes, that thou sin not with thy tongue. Psal.

Psal. 39. 1. Psal. 34. 11, 12, 13. 2 Pet. 3. 10. Jam. 1. 26.

5 Take due care to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, *Exod. 20. 8.*

6. Also remember thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, *Exod. 20. 10.* yea, not only on the Sabbath day, but generally at all times to use thy diligence, that thy Family may be as a little Church of Christ, as *Philemons* was, *Phil. ver. 1. 2.* (I have specified these duties, because so many Professors do so much neglect them.) It will be thy wisdom, to follow all this good counsel. For the LORD God, is a Sun and shield to them that walk uprightly; he will give them grace and glory; he will withhold no good thing from them, *Psal. 4. 11. Prov. 16. 17.*

9. Learn of God, to commit and leave thy self to him, as the right-
 112 ous and wise Judge of all the Earth, to do with thee, what he pleaseth, and particularly, to better thy estate when and in what measure he pleaseth, *Psal. 10. 14. Phil. 4. 11.* But remember and study thy own weakness, that thou art not sufficient of thy self, to do any thing well as of thy self, without Christ, *John 15 5. 2 Cor. 3. 9.* Therefore stir up thy self, to take hold of Christ (*Es. 64. 6, 7.*) as the strength of the LORD, (*Es. 27. 4. 5.*) Even on our Lord Jesus Christ, who is mighty to save, even able to save unto the uttermost all them who come unto God by him, *Es. 63. 1. Heb. 7. 25. Psal. 89. 19. Phil. 4. 13.* (The want of this hinders the profiting of Professors very much.

10. Also humble thy self daily for thy infirmities and daily fail-
 ings.

11. Also give all diligence, to make thy Calling and Election
 113 sure, and that all thy graces, especially thy Faith and Patience may be increased, *2 Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7, 10. & 3. 17, 18. & 1 Pet 5. 9, 10. Rom. 8. 2, 3, 4. Jam. 1. 3, 4.*

12. Be sure to consider seriously, every one of you in particular, wherein he or she can do God or his people service, and resolve with a strong resolution, if it shall please him, to put an end to your Adversity, (with his gracious and blessed assistance) to serve him and them accordingly.

13. Lastly, at all times, even whilst thou art doing these things, and when thou hast done them all, and done much for God and his people, depend not on any thing which thou hast done, (as if thou hadst thereby, or therewith made satisfaction in any measure to Gods justice for thy sins, or any of them, or merited any good thing at his hands, but relie for thy justification and acceptance with God, and

everlasting salvation; on the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and the free grace of God in and through him, admiring his free grace.

Qu. But what ought those Professors to do, who know, think, or doubt, 114
they be not born again?

Ans. That which is most proper for them to do is, to exercise themselves constantly in the word of Truth, waiting for the gracious operation of the holy Spirit in and on their souls, to beget them again, or else to shew them *Christ* already formed in their souls, *Joh. 14. 16, 17. Gal. 4. 19.* But withal they ought to follow the good counsel before rehearsed; and all Professors, *when cause is, to do, what many Professors very seldom or never do, viz. to ask the advice of able and godly Professors, especially Ministers, and not to keep the devils counsel; not to secret matters according to his counsel.*

Note. If God in chastizing any of us, doth aim at any of the ends 115 which I have before mentioned, and (though weakness of memory, or otherwise) have not reached to it in the precedent instructions, or any other end, which I have not mentioned; I pray you, *hear the rod, and [him] who hath appointed it, yielding to him concerning it; let that be done which he shooteth at in chastizing thee.*

If thou desirest to know more medicines, which it becometh thee to use for the bettering of thy estate.

1. Enquire and consider frequently, whether thou hast any true 116 grace or not, what thou hast in thy heart, which a meet Formalist cannot have.

2. Consider and study as exactly and wisely as thou canst, thy own sins, and what thou hast deserved at Gods hands by them, taking heed that thou think not too ill of other folks sins, as of the Professors and other inhabitants of *London, Southwark, Norwich, Colchester, Portsmouth*, as if they were sinners above others, worse sinners than others. Take heed of this, *Luke 13. 1, 2.*

3. Mortifie all the members of the old man; the flesh with all the affections and lusts, even all thy ungodly lusts, *Col. 3. 5. Eph. 5. 24.* For this work some of Dr. *Prestons* Sermons are of very good use.

4. Give due diligence, to be exercised under the chastening hand of God, to the bettering of thy spiritual estate, *Heb. 12. 10, 11.*

5. Draw near to God oft; (*Psal. 73. 28. Jam. 4. 8.*) viz. to hear his word, by prayer; but be sure, when thou drawest nigh to him, to sanctifie him, I mean, to testify to thy own conscience, the high account which thou makest of his Holiness; by thy holy and reverend usage of the holy things; which I take to be the sanctifying of the LORD, *Lev. 10. 3.*

(See,

(See how they be like to fare, that do draw nigh to the *LORD* and not sanctifie him, v. 1, 2, 3.)

- 117 6. Seek unto God, to work for thee and thy brethren; seek his favour and help; but seek it *according to his will* (revealed in the holy Scriptures) that he may hear thee, and thy brethren, *Hos. 5. 15. & 6. 1, 2, 3. 1 Job. 5. 14, 15.*

7. Let thy heart be prepared unto this work, *Psal. 10. 17. yea,* and thy wayes also. But if thy heart be, thy wayes will. [And here consider, 1. When *the peoples hearts were prepared*, then God hearkened to *Hozekiahs* prayer for them, and healed them (in respect of their discomforts, tears and discouragements.) *2 Chron. 30. 18, 19. 2. Jotham, King of Judah, became mighty, because he prepared his way before the LORD his God, 2 Chron. 27. 6.* Remember this. 3. If a
118 man doth *purge himself from his wood and earth*, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Masters use, and prepared unto every good work, *2 Tim. 30. 21.*] All of you remember, who said, *When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?* *Luke 18. 8.* Stir up faith in thy own heart, and in the hearts of thy fellow-professors, to look on and *expect better times*, as if they were visible to the eyes of the body, or coming within a few leagues of us, *and wait for them with patience, Heb. 11. 1, 13. Rom. 4. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. & 8. 25.* and shew thy self resolute and courageous, *when there is cause*, as if thou wert in no danger. Let it appear *before the sons of men*, that thou trustest in God, *Psal. 31. 19.*

- 119 I shall now speak of some things, which, I think, may conduce more to the bettering of thy estate, than some (it may be) think they do. 1. Train up thy children and servants, (to the uttermost of thy abilities) in the way wherein they should go, *Prov. 32. 6.* 2. See that thou canst render a good reason for all the parts of thy *Non-conformity*. 3. When thou prayest, *be sure to serve God in thy prayers*, and to pray for God, *Prov. 16. 4.* I mean, with due respect to his honour and glory, and aiming at it, *Jam. 4. 3.* 4. Apply thy self to God
120 with earnest prayers and hearty thanksgivings for the Church of God, the Nation, the Governours of it, the Parliament, foreign Plantations, the People of Christ in all Countreys, (converted and unconverted) and enemies and persecutors (if there be any.) It may be, God doth not grant the requests which some make to him for themselves, because they do not love and pray as they ought for others, even their enemies, *Mat. 5. 44. Luke 23. 34. Act. 7. 60.* And as for our King, who knows, whether he be come to these Kingdomes, to do very much good for the Church of God?

5. Receive no manner of person *as a Brother*, because he is against some of the things of the Church of England, but rather learn, how to behave thy self towards *Familists, Ranters, (Triumphant) Quakers, Separatists*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. 2 Pet. 2. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. 2 John v. 10, 11. Jude v. 10, 12, 13. 6. Think it more necessary, *to amend* 121 *thy manner of praying and fasting*, than to make long prayer, or to pray or fast often. Friends, I would gladly have *you* all amend your conversation, and walk more accurately and precisely. Give me leave to put you in mind, among other things, of that, which may possibly move you so to do.

1. What if ye knew good cause to be confident, that ye should have liberty and peace, and worldly prosperity, and be freed from all grievances, and that God would not at all punish or chastize you for your sins? Would it then be to your hurt, to amend your behaviour upon the admonition or request of an old man, and to fill his heart with gladness at the age of 72? For in the sight of God, it is 122 good so to do, Mic. 6. 8.] And the Proverb saith, *Every thing is the better for the amending*; and the wisdom which is from above, is intractable, easie to be entreated, Jam. 3. 17. viz. to do that which is good in God's sight, tending unto his honour, or the good of any of his people. Yea, the Lord doth require of *me*, and of *all you*, to grow in grace, 2 Pet. 3. 18. to make straight paths for our feet, Heb. 12. 13. to walk circumspectly, accurately, precisely, Eph. 5. 15. to cause our moderation (and other graces) to be known to all men, Phil. 4. 5. and to let our light shine so before men, that they may see our good works, and glorifie our Father who is in heaven, Mat. 5. 16. What's become of this Light? where and when shines it? Verily the light of many Professors is a very dim light, and scarce visible in their conversings, excepting the daily practice of their forms of Godliness, and a few other good words at times. We had some not long since, who were called *new Lights*: of that kind of Lights, I desire no more, but such as John Baptist was, *burning and shining lights*, Joh. 5. 35. such as burn inwardly with true zeal, and shine outwardly by and in good works. Also the great God commands us, to wash our selves, so as to make our selves clean; to put away the evil of our doings from before his eyes; to cease to do evil, and learn to do well, &c. Isa. 1. 16, 17. and our most dear Friend, Jesus Christ, teacheth us, to do singular things, more than others, Mat. 5. 47. and tells us plainly, that except our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Mat. 5. 19. And, how must it exceed their righteousness? chiefly by be-
H
lieving

lieving in *Jesus Christ*, and by purging the heart from all spiritual
 123 filthiness, and by judgment and mercy, Mar. 23. 23. Why Friends, the
 ungodly man, in *Mic. 6. 6, 7.* speaks of himself, as content to pur-
 chase God's favour, and a pardon of his sins at a very great price :
 only he speaks not of *leaving his sins*, and doing his duty ; beyond
 whom ye must go, in being thoroughly content , to part with your
 sins, and to do your duty, or else suffer, what ye are unwilling to
 suffer. But the love of Christ in dying for poor miserable sinners,
 when they were without strength to help themselves, and unworthy
 to be pitied and helped, constraineth those who live by and through
 him, *not to live to themselves, but to him who died for them, and rose again,*
 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

124 2. Brethren, ye ought to reform your conversings universally and
unreservedly, completely : 1. That your sins may be blotted out, &c.
Act. 3. 19. 2. That ye may attain that great salvation, *Prov. 28. 13.*
 2 Cor. 7. 10. 3. That ye may be vessels unto honour, *meet for the*
Masters use, 2 Tim. 2. 21, 22. 4. That ye may be blameless and harm-
 less, the children of God, without rebuke in the midst of the Nation a-
 mong whom ye live, *Phil. 2. 15.* 5. That ye may be able to pray as the
 Psalmist prays, *Psal. 119. 28, 41 38, 76. 107, 116, 154, 169, 176.*
 6. That your prayers may be the more effectual, and of the greater
 force towards the (near-approaching) destruction of *Babylon*, and the
hastening of Christ's reign on earth, (if he shall reign here otherwise
 than now he doth, either in person, or by the Saints) and the coming
 down of the holy City, the new *Jerusalem*, from God out of Hea-
 ven, when the glory and and prosperity of the Church militant on
 earth shall be next to that of the Church triumphant in Heaven : against
 which time we ought to be prepared, as a Bride adorned for her Hus-
 band, *Eph. 5. 27. Rev. 21. 1, 2.* Do not these things require an ex-
 act and plenary Reformation, even the cleansing of our selves from all
 filthiness, both of the flesh and spirit, 2 Cor 7. 1. and the keeping of our
 selves unspotted from the world ? *Jam. 1. 27.* I think they do.

125 3. But let me shew you, wherefore I think, that of the Professors
 in England, many be meer Formalists, and many born again, who
 are one or more degrees too short of that exact and even walking
 which is called for, *Eph. 5. 15. & Heb. 12. 12, 13.* First, *Solomon,*
 126 *Prov. 16. 7.* saith, *When a mans wayes please the LORD, he maketh his*
enemies to be at peace with him. If this Scripture be of no great force
 now, to make us fear, that the waies of many Professors do not please
 the Lord ; I pray God, we may not be, as it were enforced to fear it
 hereafter by the increase of our afflictions. Secondly, it is something too

my purpose, which we read of the weakness and failings of the twelve Apostles in the Histories of the Gospel; and of *Paul* or *Barnabas*, *Act. 15. 16.* &c. and of *Peter* and *Barnabas*, *Gal. 2. 11.* &c. and in the Scriptures of the failings of others, whereof I have named many, *Marg. 32, 33, 34.* The Scriptures do witness, that God's Covenant-servants, yea his holy servants, have missed it in a considerable measure, *before the Law, and under the Law, and under the Gospel.* 2. The devils are as malicious, as cruel, as strong, as cunning, as industrious and watchful, as they have at any time hitherto been; and if they have not gotten some skill by experience (as some think they have) yet, if this be part of the time prophesied of, *Rev. 12. 12.* the devil is very wroth against the Church of Christ, more wroth than he hath ordinarily used to be. And for the flesh in us, that is, *by nature*, in respect of Temptations, the same in all men, and there is, some quantity of it, in the best men, *Gal. 5. 17.* And the world, that also is, as to the tempting of men with its baits and allurements, (speaking in a general manner) the very same, which it hath been from the beginning; only it is much fuller of such traps and snares, than formerly. So that an understanding and impartial stranger may think, we have been and be as likely to trespass against our God as his servants of old have been. 3. Is not this part of the time concerning which *the faithful and true witness* foretold, *Mat. 24. 12.* that *iniquity should abound*, and the love, of many wax cold? I believe, it is, and part of those perilous times which *Paul* prophesied of, *2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.* and that the *Formalists* there spoken of, be, *many of them*, such as have a *spacious and specious form of godliness*, yea that *many* of them be *men and women of this Nation*, because it hath so huge a multitude of Professors. For the fuller any Countrey is of such, the more probable it is, that there be among them many meer Formalists. But 4. my own ¹²⁷ experience and observation in near 30 years, the unfit words which I have heard with my ears, and the actions which I have seen with my eyes, and that which I have heard of credible persons, and my rational conjectures; these do tell me, that it may be very truly said of many Professors, which *Moses* spake of the *Israelites*, *Deut. 29. 4.* that *they have not a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day.* For many Professors do so behave and carry themselves, as if the forsaking of some gross sins, entering into an excellent way of the Protestant Religion, a partial form at home, and going to Meetings, were the four integral parts of godliness. Inasmuch, that, when there was a report, that the Act of the Ministers removal five miles was rejected, there came to my mind, (according to that which I feared ¹²⁸ would

would come to pass) the word of the LORD, *Jer. 37. 10. Though ye had smitten the whole Army of the Caldeans that fight against you, and there remained but wounded men among them; yet should they rise up, and burn this City with fire.*

- 12) 4. But let me speak somewhat more of the Holiness and prosperity of the Church of Christ, before and after the fall of *Babylon*. I cannot but expect a greater Reformation, than I yet see, of the conversions of Professors, before the ruine of *Babylon*; that their transgressions may not hinder their prayers for the destruction of it: and as for the superlative tranquillity and happiness of the true Church on earth, which shall be next to that of *Heaven*; I believe, the foregoer of it will be a very thorough and full Reformation, and a more sinless and heaven-like life of the true Christians, than that of any generation before it since the dayes of the holy Apostles. Which degree of perfection, if thou (who readest or hearest read any part of this Book) shalt not cover; and endeavour diligently to attain it, thou mayest fare as the nameless Lord, *2 King. 7.* did, who saw with the eyes of his body fine flour and barley sold in the gate of *Samaria* at easie prices; but, through unbelief, did not eat thereof. So thou possibly mayest foresee darkly with the eyes of thy mind, what excellent things very many of the members of the Church shall be partakers of hereafter, and thy self not partake of them. Thou mayest be like the heath in the desert, which sees not, when good cometh, to which the man who trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, is compared by *Jeremy*, Chap. 17. 5, 6. who in the next verses compares the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is, (as I may a thoroughly reformed Christian) to a tree which is planted by the waters, *Psal. 1. 3.* and spreadeth out her roots by the River, which shall not see, when heat cometh, nor be careful in a year of drought, nor cease
- 13) 17) from yielding fruit. 5. What think ye of Gods waiting, that he may be gracious to us? *Isa. 30. 18.* What is it for him, to wait for that end? It is, as it were, to stand somewhat near us, having in and at his right hand good things, which may be used unto the promoting of Christs cause and interest; and the welfare of his people or some of them, and therewithal our own good, *Psal. 16. 11. Rev. 3. 10 & 22. 17.* which things also he really purposeth to bestow actually upon thee of us, who shall prove meet to receive them. For then will be a due and fit time for him, to bestow them upon us, *Jam. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 13.* Which convenient season, (we may well believe) is then come, when we are; 1. Daily humbled under the mighty hand of God for our
- 13) 18) own sins, and grieved for the sins of others; 2. And so humbled under

the mighty and correcting hand of God, as to confess to God, our walking contrary to him, and his walking contrary to us. 3. And so as to accept of the punishment of our iniquities (*with the whole heart*) *Lev. 26. 40, 41, 42. Mic. 7. 8, 9, 10. Lam. 3. 42.* bearing it patiently, without murmuring and repining or hard thoughts of God. 4. And when we have learned of him, *how to be full, and to abound*, and how to be abased, and to suffer need, *how to behave our selves in prosperity and adversity*, *Phil. 4. 12.* 5. And to pray fervently for our selves, with due respect to the glory of God, and the good of his people; that is aiming at those ends, *Jam. 4. 2, 3.* 6. And when we are become thoroughly willing and strongly resolved (with Gods assistance) to leave all our sins, and to do all our duties. Yea, Friends, the most high God will be highly pleased to see us well-minded toward him and his people, and when we are so, he will even delight to bestow the good things (according to his said purpose) upon us. *Apollos* had watered 133 the Christians of *Corinth*, *1 Cor. 3. 6.* and doubtless was kindly affectioned toward them with brotherly love, and did desire and seek their welfare; yet there was a time, when his will was not at all to come unto them, no not although the Apostle *Paul* did greatly desire him. And why? even, because at that time it was not convenient: Namely because many of them were so affected toward him, *1 Cor. 1. 12.* that he could not hope to be kindly received and entertained of them, and to have them make a right use of his presence and company for their souls good: so that at that time it would not have been convenient for him or them, or in respect of *Jesus Christ*. For when he shall have a convenient time, then he will come unto them, *1 Cor. 16. 12.* namely when God by *Pauls* ministry or otherwise, hath brought their spirits into a fit temper, to make such use as they ought of his ministry and labours. And so God doth not deliver, exalt, and give Professors such and such good things, because they be not prepared and ready to make such use of them as they ought unto their own benefit and the benefit of others, and the credit of the Gospel.

For an instance, he will not exalt a Professor who keeps his stock of pride, because, he would thence take occasion to grow in pride, rather than to walk more humbly, than he did in his low Estate. But 134 Friends, (I speak now to poorly reformed Professors) how long, do ye think, God hath waited for your Reformation? It may be, 5, 6, 7. years, and for the amendment of some of you, 10 years, and of some 20, and of some more: yea, and some of you have been, during these years, now and then in the House of Correction and oft in some danger

- ger to be brought into it. Is this true? And are ye not yet prepared and fit to receive the alms which God hath in his hands to bestow upon you? Ye are but sorry Scholars. How long do ye think it fit, that the most high God (on whom ye ought to wait continually, *untill he bath mercy upon you*, (Psal. 123. 2.) *how long do ye think it fit*, that he should wait for you? And, how long do ye think he will wait for you? Do ye think, it is fit, that he should wait *your leisure*? Whatsoever any of you think; for certain, the longer God waits, the greater is your iniquity in not striving earnestly to leave off your sins.
- 135 And why is the *LORD* in the very same verse, wherein he is said to wait, *viz. Es. 30. 18.* Why is he in the very same verse said to be a *God of judgement*? Is it not, because he knows how long it is fit for him to wait, and how long he hath waited, and when it is good for us, that he should cease from correcting us? I indeed and my fellow-Ministers of *Christ* are not inspired as the Prophets of old were, neither can I mourn and weep as many can, but if the riches of Gods goodness and forbearance and great patience and long-continued *waiting*, and his, as it were, stooping to us, and working strangely for us, *when and whilst* we were so far short of a full and perfect Reformation, and his correctings of us, and his mitigating and lessening of our chastisements, dangers and fears; if all this doth not partly draw us, and partly drive us out of our sins, and win us to amend our doings
- 136 *speedily*, I shall be so far from expecting very great matters, that *I shall fear*, we do treasure up wrath against a day of greater and sorer wrath (speaking in a general manner) than hath as yet fallen upon us. Remember ye therefore the natural branches of the good Olive-tree, which were broken off from it, being their own Olive-tree: remember, I say, this breaking off, and take heed of deferring the reformation which thou lackest; *be not careless but fear*, lest thou
- 137 also be broken off, *Rom. 11. 17. &c.* For we who are *Christs* Ministers, cannot say, *yet your space to repent of and from your sins, shall be 120 years*; as *Gen. 6. 3.* *nor, if they continue barren one whole year longer*, then thou shalt cut them down, as *Luke 13. 9.* *no nor yet forty dayes*, and then ye shall be overthrown, as *Jon. 3. 4.* *No, our words, are, To day if ye will hear Gods voice, harden not your hearts, &c. Psal. 95. 7. &c.* For we know not what a day will bring forth, *Prov. 27. 1. Jam. 4. 13, 14.* I shall notwithstanding shew you as near as I can, when the end of our sufferings will be. I believe our most gracious and wise God will put an end to them.
- 138 1. When that which letteth our prayers and deliverance is taken out of the way, (as *2 Thes. 2. 7.*) Which I believe to be our sins. See *Marg. 30. &c.*
2. When

3. When we are taken in the snares which God hath laid for us. *Will a man take up a snare from the earth, when he hath taken nothing at all? Amos 3. 5.* Now he who is one of Christs people is taken in his snare of affliction, when he is (by it and Gods word) brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 5. and made willing to receive and follow all his counsel.

3. God will do it for us *in due time*: which is, when he hath attained all the ends whereat he shooteth in afflicting us. See *Marg.* 10. &c.

4. When we *hear the rod and [him] who hath appointed it*, Micah 6. 9. that is, have taken notice of the message of the Rod, and are fully resolved to do what God requires of us by it.

5. When we are fittingly exercised by and under our Crosses, and do make such use of them as we ought, so that they do yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to us, *Heb. 12. 11.* to Christ, and to his Church.

6. When God doth with our chastenings teach us out of his Law, *139. Psal. 94. 12. & 119. 59.* that which by the voice of his chastenings he calls us to learn out of it so as to do it. See *Marg.* 27. &c. (The cause ceasing, the effect will cease.)

7. When it agrees with Gods faithfulness and justice, to forgive us our sins: which is, when we confess and forsake our sins, &c. *Prop. 28. 13. Es. 1. 16, 17, 18, 19. Es. 59. 20. Hag. 2. 18.* And for examples, Noah being a just and perfect man, found grace in the eyes of the LORD for himself and his Family, when very many millions of men were drowned, *Gen. chap. 6. chap. 7. chap. 8.* Jacob and his Family, having great cause to fear the wrath of their Neighbours, and of God also, God commanded them to go up to Bethel and to dwell there: whereupon Jacob cleansed his house of Idols, and then journeyed, and the terror of God was upon the Cities that were round about them, so that they did not pursue after them, *Gen. 35. 1, 5.* When the LORD had (with much ado) won Moses to undertake (as many would have accounted it) a very dangerous service, then he comforted him with this, that all the men were dead, who sought his life, *Exod. 4. 19.* And when the Israelites at Gods call went out of Egypt, under the conduct of Moses and Aaron, not a dog did move his tongue against any of them, nor against any of their beasts, *Exod. 11. 7.* And what did God promise Israel in *Exod. 34. 24:* even, that not any man should desire their land, when they should go up to appear before the LORD their God thrice in the year. But Solomon speaks indefinitely, saying, *When a mans ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him, Prov. 16. 7.*

8. God

140 8. God will put a period to our troubles, when we are so humbled under the Almighty and chastizing hand of God, as to resolve thoroughly to forsake all our sins, and to cast all our care upon him, being content to live at his finding, and upon his allowance under his dispensations of prosperity and adversity. *Jam. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 6, 7, 10.* A man is *never fully humbled* under the Kingdom and Power of the Almighty, till he be so minded.

141 9. When we are thoroughly well prepared and meet to receive of God, what he hath in and at his right hand to give us. (See a little before.) For an *exceeding rich man* will not keep in his own hand a piece of silver, which he purposeth to bestow on a very poor man, a long time after he sees, he is come nigh him, and in a fit posture to receive it, &c. *viz.* standing before him quietly, with a sober countenance, with his hat in his hand, &c. But if a poor man, whom a rich man calls to him, should come proudly, dancing, laughing and grinning, and stand before him, one while *on his right leg*, another while *on his left leg*, one while *turning his face towards him*, another while *his back*, playing with his Buttons, and talking proudly, *saucily*, and *malapertly* to him; it may be this kinde of behaviour would cost the poor man the learning of better manners before he should receive any Alms, (excepting sharp and chiding words) of him. Neither do I see wherefore we should expect to have the most high God deal more indulgently with us, but for our good to reject our prayers, till we have learned how to come unto him and how to behave our selves before him, and that as touching both the outward and inward man: for he knows all the secrets of the heart.

142 10. God will ease us of our afflictions, when (according to his wise Discipline) there is (as *Peters* Language is) *no need* of them, *1 Pet. 1. 6.* Now *medicinals* of the body, when they have wrought that work in or on the body, for which the Physician or Surgeon useth then; then they cease to be needful, *Mat. 9. 12.* And even so chastisements and corrections, when God hath attained all his ends, for which he sends them, then they are needles. But here we must know, that God may seek his own honour, and aim at the promoting of his own causes, yea, and the good, as it were, of his whole Church, in afflicting one single person; as ye may see in *2 Cor. 1. 3. to 12.* and (if ye study seriously) in many other Scriptures.

11. God will relieve and help us, when the Holy Ghost hath burnt up, or washt away, or blown away, the corruptions and ungodly lusts which are in our hearts, *Mat. 3. 11. John 3. 5, 6, 7, 8.* When God hath purged away our sins and iniquities, and driven us out of our
evil

evil wayes by our chastisements and afflictions, *Es. 27. 9. Zech. 13. 9.* We must be rid of the naughty things which are in our hearts and wayes.

12. When we are become throughly meet for the Masters use, and well prepared for every good work, *2 Tim. 2. 20, 21, 22.* 144

13. When we have learned to seek God duly and diligently, and, in the Faith of being raised up, to turn from our sins, and to exhort and encourage one another to turn unto the *LORD Hos. 5. 14, 15.* with *6. 1, 2, 3.* Come now and let us reason together, as it were, face to face: (I shall speak to a few, to many, to all of you.)

Why is there so little speech amongst us of reforming Professors? Why do we who are Professors, so seldom reprove Professors? I assure you, it is not through want of just occasions of reprovng. God commands us to cleanse and amend our doings, to cease to do evil, and to do, what he commands, well, &c. *Es. 1. & 58. Joel 2. Act. 3. &c.* And ought ye not to hear and obey him unreservedly? I think, ye ought, and that, because he is your Creator, King, and most bountiful Benefactor, &c. yea, I may well say like *Nehemiah, chap. 5. 9.* ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of irreligious persons? Also he is able (if it please him) to restrain the Covetousness, and Ambition, and all other ungodly lusts of all the men in the world, so as to bridle them all from desiring thy House, Land, Goods, &c. or any part of them, &c. as he did over-rule the enemies of *Israel, Exod. 34. 23, 24.* Why do we not then amend all our wayes according to his word, and trust in him before the sons of men, to make good his promises to us? *Psal. 31. 19. Prov. 16. 17.* Many of you do believe that the happiest time that ever the Church of Christ shall have on earth, is not very far off, and that the fall of *Babylon* is nearer than that, and some of you, that your own (outward) prosperity was nearer, than the fall of *Babylon*. But can ye really and indeed believe, that these great things will come to pass, whilst the sins of Professors do hinder their prayers? I hope, the most knowing and wisest of you, do not believe it, or else will not long believe it. And which of you, when the new *Jerusalem* is come down from God out of Heaven, would be content (if all godly persons shall not then speed alike) to have the gates of it kept shut against him by the holy Angels? *Rev. 21. 2, 12.* Remember the Children of *Israel*, how God led them in the Wilderness, to humble them, and to prove them; how he humbled them and suffered them to hunger, and fed them with Manna, and kept their garments from waxing old, and chastened them, as a man chasteneth his son, &c. *Deut. 8. 2, 3, 4, 5.* and that,

when they would not be led unto Repentance by his goodness; nor driven out of their sins by his corrections, then he swore in his *wrath*, that they should not enter into his rest, *Psal. 95. 8, 9, 10, 11. Yea, Aaron*, and also *Moses* who brought the children of *Israel* near it, yet because they did not believe the *LORD*, to sanctifie him in the eyes of the *Israelites*; therefore they themselves could not enter into it, *Num. 20.*

147 *12, 28. Only God gave Moses leave to see the Land of Israel's rest, Deut. 32. 48, &c. & 34. 1, &c. But, what is this, may some Professors say, to us? I'll tell you, God not so long since did try and prove us somewhat like as he did the children of Israel, viz. with great troubles, dangers, and fears, and by working mightily for us; and we, too too many of us did deal with him too like the children of Israel, even try and tempt him with our sins; to wit, Self-love, and self-seeking, Pride, and Ambition, unjust seeking for friends, and those of our own way, putting down, and setting up unjustly, oppression even of our own party, (Wives and Children wronged) depriving others in part, some wholly of their places and means, delaying payments, putting to charges, and suffering and sparing some unjustly and too much, even Preachers seeking great means, wearing long hair, hand-Ribbons, too much against those who were not of our judgment, &c. yea, and many of us are not yet duly hum-*

148 *bled, and thoroughly reformed by or under our 5, 6, or 7 years sufferings: and particularly we have not left out Pride, Ambition, and contempt of others, affecting of elegant and trim Preaching, and praying, vain fashions of Apparel and Ornaments, excess in rubbing, slicking and adorning floors and houses, unfaithfulness in not reproving plainly, particularly and home, not pitying and helping the poor and needy, unfit communication, idle, vain, and frothy speeches, too much mirth and jollity, &c. To whom it they amend not, God may justly swear, that they shall not enter into the new Jerusalem, nor partake of the great rest and transcendent prosper-*

149 *ity of the happy time before mentioned, although many of them do expect it. I beseech you therefore, every one of you more ife all your earthly members, Self-love, men-pleasing, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, covetousness, &c. Put away anger, wrath, malice, and corrupt communication, and lying out of your mouth, &c. And put on (as the Elect of God) bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, (forbearing, and forgiving one another) and charity, which is the bond of perfectness, &c. (Col. 3. 5. to the 16, &c.) And see to every part of the wedding garment, that there be no spot, nor wrinkle, nor any unseemly stuff upon it, Rom. 13. 12, 13, 14. Gal. 4. 19. Eph. 5. 27. Put on also the whole Armour of God, Eph. 6. 11. &c. and see that no part of it be broken, cracked, weak, or rusty for want of use, &c.*

And

And be ashamed of doing little for Christ and his Saints, whilst ye expect
 very great things through and from Christ. But some of you (perad- 150
 venture) do think but little, or not at all of those two great matters.
 What think ye then of your selves? For without true holiness and
 righteousness of life and fairer shews of grace than many Professors make,
 thou canst not say, thou hast a new Nature, Ezek. 36. 26, 27. or
 that thy fleshly lusts be crucified, Gal. 5. 24. or that thou dost love,
 or fear, or trust in God at all. Verily, Brethren, it is one thing to be
 a Presbyterian, or Independant, or Anabaptist, and to come to Family-
 duty, and mixt Meetings, and another thing to go to Heaven, or to be
 right in the way to Heaven; and I would not have men build their
 expectation of everlasting life on such a Foundation as a Fox can
 break down, but on a firm and sure foundation, which is *Jesus Christ*
 apprehended by such a faith as works by love toward God, works
 conducing to the promoting of Christs interest, and by love toward
 men conducing to the good of men, especially of Gods family on
 earth, 1 John 5. 12. Gal. 5. 6. Gal. 6. 10. Endeavour therefore, I
 beseech you, and that with great diligence, to reach unto an exact and
 full Reformation of your ways, and to get abundance of holiness, and
 to make it appear, ye shine in your conversation. If ye think, ye be new
 creatures, and that the flesh and its affections in your inner man be
 mortified, then shew pregnant and manifest tokens of it in your be-
 haviour daily, and in conversing with all sorts of people. Phil. 4. 5.
 1 Pet. 3. 12. after the example of Manasseh, 2 Chron. 33. 15, 16. and
 those Acts 13. 34. & 19. 18, 19, 20. & 27. 35, 36. If ye have slain
 any of the King of Saints enemies, let it appear by their fore-skins,
 as David did, that he had slain two hundred Philistims, 1 Sam. 18.
 27. Make it known, I mean, by your words, and deeds, and gestures,
 that your corruptions be mortified. And be not ashamed, to let 151
 those, with whom ye converse, know (by your amendments) that
 ye be convinced of your aberrations and failings, (1 Tim. 4. 15.) but
 ashamed to continue one day longer in your sins. For this base and abo-
 minable sin of obstinacy (what should I call it?) hath helped and doth
 help the devil, to keep from bettering their behaviour, (doublets)
 many a man, and many a woman, and some children (whose Parents
 have wanted true christian love to correct them betimes, (Prov. 22. 6. &
 13. 24.) of whom I was so kept about three days from amending one
 of my faults.

Shall I reason with you a little, and ask you a few questions, ho- 152
 ping, that your consciences will do their Office, whilst I am doing
 this. Do not many of you expect, to be greatly exalted in this

world? And whosoever hath this hope in his heart, doth it not call upon him, to reform his wayes, and the wayes of all that are under his authority or power? Which, if any of you be so dull of understanding, as not to believe; yet ye know, that God commands and calls on us to reform our wayes, and that to this Reformation he hath annexed a promise of mercy, *Prov. 28. 13. Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23, 27, 28. Joel 2. 12, 13, 14. Jer. 18. 7, 8.* Can any of you shew me, where the Lord saith, *He will forgive sinners, and do them good, although they do not forsake their sins?* Or do any of you hope, that he will extend his mercy and forgiveness unto you, although ye be not content to leave yours? If any of you have such a hope, of what kind is it, but a groundless, bastard, rash, rotten hope? No, no, Friend, throw away all thy sins, and do all thy duties; *leave not a hoof behind in Egypt (Exod. 10. 26.) nor so much as one dainty dish on thy Table, or in thy Entry for the devil and graceless men to feed on, (Psal. 141. 4. Prov. 4. 17.)* Pray, to what end do ye keep any of your sins? What mean ye to do with them? What good work do ye hope to make of or with them? What good fruits or benefits have they yielded to you, 154 or will they yield to you? *Rom. 6. 23.* Can ye still persuade your minds to be of your opinion, that it is a wise part, to keep some of them, and not to let them all go, as if a man should keep some money in his purse to keep it warm?) Do ye think, ye shall gain any thing by them, which is really good for you, and that the loss of them would be a real loss to you? Hav: ye so much wit, and so little wisdom, as to think so? Indeed, Friends, the leaving of them will be no real loss to you, and the keeping of them no real gain. I think, it agrees not with God's justice and wisdom, to suffer men to gain by keeping such base, filthy, stinking stuff. But suppose he should, will the benefit of keeping them be better than that which thou mayest get by forsaking them? If not, thou makest but a sorry bargain. And upon what ground wilt thou expect deliverance, &c? Truly, I judge it a superlative act of grace and favour, and of exceeding great mercy in God, to pardon us, when we do duly and thoroughly humble our selves for our sins and forsake them: but to desire and expect, to have God pardon us all that is past, and, as it were, *to license us to go on still in our sins*: this I may well account a most horrible and absurd thing, even an abomination of Desolation and Destruction.

155 1. Take thou heed then, of sending a Message after Christ, by thy sins, saying, *I will not have Christ to reign over me, Luke 19. 14.* For the doom of such is, *Those mine enemies, who would not, that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me. v. 27.*

3. Yea, Take heed, lest thy sins should, as it were, steal to heaven, whilst thou art asleep in the cradle of security; lest they come up, for a memorial (of thy naughtiness,) before God, as the prayers and alms of *Cornelius* did come up before God, for a memorial [of his goodness] *Act. 10. 4, 31.*

3. Take heed, lest the good desires, and purposes, and motions, 156 which the good spirit of God hath and shall stir up in thy heart. and which thou hast or shalt drown in carnal delights and pleasures, *Amos 3. 1, 4, 5, 6.* or choke with the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, *Mat. 13. 7, 22. Luke 21. 34.* or quench with the stinking water of thy daily sins, or by neglecting them, (not nourishing and maintaining them by adding fuel to them, and by blowing them, *1 Thess. 5. 19.*) take heed, I say, lest such motions as these, of whose destruction thou hast made, or shalt make thy self guilty, lest they call unto God against thee, as the blood of murdered *Abel* did against his brother *Cain*, *Gen. 4. 10.*

4. Take heed, thou be not like those children of *Belial*, who despised the earthly King, whom the Lord had set over them, and brought him no presents, *1 Sam. 10. 27.* For, if ye bring the King of *Saints* very few or no presents, or only such wherein he delighteth not, I cannot promise you, that he will hold his peace, as King *Saul* did, *Psal. 2. 11, 12. Isa. 1. 11, 14, 15.*

3. Take heed, it be not written in a Book, that it may be for ever and 157 over, that ye be children of *Rebellion*, lying children, children that will not bear the Law of the Lord; who say to the Prophets, prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits, &c. *Isa. 30. 8, 9, 10, 11, &c.*

6. Take heed of saying, *This or that is a hard saying, who can bear it?* *Joh. 6. 60.* that is, endure to hear it?

7. Take heed of looking too much to the hearts, tongues and hands of men, and too little to the Lord. For, *2 Chron. 12. 2, 3.* it is not said, that *Shishak* King of *Egypt*, came up against *Jerusalem*, because he was angry with them, but because they had transgressed against the LORD. Let us therefore imitate the true Church, *Mic. 7. 7, 8, 9, 10.*

8. Take heed of *TEKEL* which was one of the words that were 158 written on the wall of *Belshazzar's* Palace, and signifies, *Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting*, too light, *Dan. 5. 27.*

9. Take heed, lest thy incorrigibleness help to make this time such to England, or the Professors of England, as that, *2 Chron. 36. 16. &c.*

despised his words, and misused his Prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people: till there was no remedy, &c. O what a word was that, Till there was no remedy!

10. If thou thinkest, that thou hast performed the commandment of the LORD in destroying the *Amalakites*, and all that they had, 1 Sam. 15. 3, 13. Take heed of, *What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep, and lowing of the Oxen, which I hear? v. 14.* For shall not he who planted the ear, hear? he who formed the eye, see? he who teacheth man knowledge, know? *Psal. 94. 9, 10.* Thy sins cannot make a beastly noise, and God not hear it. Yea, it may be, some of the godly Ministers will (according to their duty, (Jer. 8. 6.) *harken*, and hear the lowing and bleating of thy sins; not only of the best and chiefest of them, (1 Sam. 15. 9, 15, 21.) the chiefest in thy estimation, because by them (as *Demetrius* said to the Craftsmen, *Act. 19. 25.*) thou hast much of thy wealth, (gettest and keepest much of it) as by thy covetousness (if thou wilt not have me think, thou art covetous, then let thy conversation be without covetousness, *Heb. 13. 3.*) covetous seeking and keeping worldly wealth, fraud, over-reaching, &c. (whosoever sees his Christian brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, such a man doth not love God, *Luke 3. 11. 1 Job. 3. 17.*) I say, not only of thy fat sins, which thou keepest for filthy lucre's sake (*Tit. 1. 11.*) but also of thy lean, poor, carrion-sins, which do yield, if any fruit at all, very little, and such as is not worth talking of; as prating and foolish talking, vain and idle words, unseemly jesting, and the like. It may be also, some of them who shall hear the noise of thy sins, will shew themselves servants of Christ, (*Gal. 3. 10.*) to win faithful, (*Prov. 10. 6. 2 Tim. 2. 2.*) in reproving thee for them, and, it may be shame thee, if they can, quite out of them; that thou mayest not perish under the wrath of God. Indeed such Ministers are your best Friends, and do best deserve to have power over your passions.

11. Take heed of being like *Hophni* and *Phineas*, who hearkened not to the voice of their Father, because the LORD would destroy them, 1 Sam. 2. 25. For why will ye die, or be destroyed, O ye Professors of England? *Ezek. 18. 31.* Can any of you shew any sufficient reason, why they should desire to die? If any man can, yet it would be a wise part for them, to make an even reckoning with God before they die; and God may possibly take them out of this world within one or two days after they have read this, or heard it read.

12. Take heed of that sharp commandment concerning the Fig-tree which was fruitless three years; cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? *Luke 13. 7.* For all that

more, and then if it bear not fruit, thou shalt cut it down, v. 8, 9. And, it may be, God hath heard the prayers of some eminent Christians, and spared thee, to the end of the sixth or seventh year, or more. Art thou sure, he will spare thee six or seven months more, or seven dayes more?

13. Take heed of being assassinated or massacred, after the manner of *Paris* and *J. &c.* For I assure you, the care and pains which some Professors take of and with their Families, to educate them according to their duty, and the rest of their behaviour, do not give me cause, to be confident, that they will not be killed with some such kind of death, and their children trained up in *Egypt* and *Babylon*. Friends, do ye use to pray, and to pray for your selves, whom ye think, ye love? What think ye of the prayers and petitions, which ye put up for your selves? What do ye aim at and seek to obtain in and by them? Are ye content to ask for your selves, and not to obtain? If ye be not, *David* tells you, if he had regarded iniquity in his heart, the LORD would not have heard him, *Psal.* 66. 18. And what is any of you, that the Lord should hear him, if he doth regard iniquity in his heart, rather than *David*? But what is it for a man to regard iniquity in his heart? It is, to regard some of his sins, or the fruit of them, so as to keep those sins (as we use to speak) at all adventures, whether God will hear his prayers or not: which I fear, many of you do.

Friends, will ye now consider, what I have said unto you? For it is one thing to read or hear; another to consider. I pray de, and be persuaded by one who desires to do you good.

1. To look on your sins as the greatest, forest and most dangerous enemies that ye have, and on every sin, as one of your enemies.
2. To go beyond *Micah's* liberal Briber, *Mic.* 6. and *Paul's* Formalist, *2 Tim.* 3. 3. To leave your sins, all of them; and all of them at once. ('Tis easier, to endure the chopping off, of five fingers at once, than of five, one after another.) 4. Especially, and in any wise, to abandon those sins which ye are well able to abandon, as *unfit language*, &c.

2. Mr. *S. Clark* in his Epistle to the Reader before his *Martyrology*, p. 2. hath these very words: One thing is very remarkable in this History; that usually before any great persecution beset the Church, the holy men of those times observed, that there was some great decay of zeal, and of the power of godliness, or some mutual contentions and quarrels amongst the people of God, or some such sin or other, that provoked God against them; and then God lets loose, &c. and the History, in page 56, 61, 100, 160, 166, & 209. mentioneth, as fore-runners of several persecutions,

tions, those sins and enormities following, and in those Pages (I think) only these; *The power of godliness much decayed, few zealously bent to Religion, unprofitable Gospellers, Hypocrisie and Dissimulation, void of simplicity and faithfull dealing, not walking in the way of the Lord, nor observing his precepts, as we ought, keeping no Discipline, pride, delicates, emulation, dissention, contending upon every occasion, every man pleasing himself, and displeasing others, with railing words in a despitous manner, moving hatred and sedition one against another, full of lucre, renouncing the world in word, but not indeed, but all, both small and great, thinking deeply upon worldly matters, and building them goodly Castles in the air, by little and little men began to be so licentious in their lives, and carnal security so increased, that, &c.*

Also I have been credibly informed, that one of the fore-runners of the enslaving of *Roche* 1628. was the mispending and profaning of the afternoon of the Lord's day, and the *slighting* or worse of the best Ministers; and that one of the fore-runners of the late long War in *Germany* 1620. &c. was very gross profaneness, &c. The same Mr. *Clark* p. 3. of the said Epistle saith; That when God exposeth us to P. he expects our *speedy and thorow Reformation, if we desire the affliction to be removed, &c.*

16 3. I believe, were it not for our sins, it would not be with us, as it is, It is the *causa sine qua non* of our, &c.

4. If you desire worse dayes, and greater troubles, I need not teach you, what to do: The way to attain your desire, is but to hold fast your dear Friends, your sins. For then ye may with good reason expect times of greater troubles and dangers. But, methinks, understanding and wise persons cannot see any sufficient cause, to desire such times.

5. The issue is this; either attend to the instructions of faithful Ministers, and reform, and take heed to thy waies according to the word of God, *Psal.* 119. 9. or else look not for deliverance, &c. but additional afflictions and punishments, according to the threatenings, *Lev.* 26. 14. to the 39. and get a very strong faith, and much humility, (that thou mayest possess thy soul under the Plows and Harrows in patience :) which one who is not thoroughly reformed, will hardly attain.

16 Let me here answer some Arguments, which may occasion some Professors, to look on a more compleat Reformation (than that which is wrought already) as needless. For peradventure it will be objected and said:

1. That upon *thats external humiliation*, God did not bring the e-
vil

vil upon his house in his daies, but in the daies of his son, 1 King. 21. 29.

A. Art thou content to have thy whole portion of good things (as wicked men have theirs, *Psal.* 17. 14.) in this life, and to go, whither *Abel* went at the time of his death, and to have the heads of 70 of thy sons within a few years after, put into baskets? 2 King. 10. I think thou art not.

3. That God hearkened to *King Hezekiah's* prayer, and healed the people, who were not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary, 2 Chron. 30. 18, 19, 20.

A. Is this any thing to thee? He prayed only for those who prepared their hearts to seek God, the Lord God of their Fathers, v. 18, 19. so that they did prepare their hearts, and the only thing which they wanted, was a ceremonial cleansing, which also they wanted not, because they were not willing to perform it, but because they wanted time to perform it; and he whose heart is prepared, will not neglect the preparing of his waies. And, as for thee, if thy heart be duly prepared to seek the Lord, thou mayest really resolve to amend thy carriage, as far forth as it is faulty, as it were, in a moment: yea know, that thy heart is not duly prepared, unless thou be willing and careful to find out thy sins, and to reform all the parts of thy conversation.

3. That God, seeing what the *Ninevites* did, turned from his fierce 166 wrath, and did not destroy them.

A. It was much, which they did; more than some Professors do: they believed God, observed a Fast very solemnly, cried mightily unto God, and turned from their evil waies, Chap. 3. 5. &c. (Go and do thou likewise, *Luke* 10. 37.) And yet God did but suspend the execution of his sentence against them; for their City was destroyed; I think, some say, about 40 years after: and many of you would be loth to have your own houses destroyed forty years hence.

4. That doubtless exceeding many of the *Israelites* were great sin- 167 ners, when they came out of *Egypt*; yet God wrought for them miraculously, &c.

A. Therein they were (I think so) a Type of *Christ's* peoples deliverance out of the bondage of *Satan*, as it is of free grace: 1 Tim. 1. 15, 16. and yet wisthal they suffered as many of us would be loth to suffer: the carcases of all their Males of 30 years old (excepting *Joshua* and *Caleb*) must fall in the wilderness, and none of those enter into the Land of promise; and when they and the rest be come near to it, they must all turn back toward the Sea of *Edom* (called the red Sea)

adjoyning to *Egypt*; and so the younger sort have wandred forty years in the wilderness, &c. *Num.* 14. 21. to 35.

168. 5. That God would have spared *Sodom*, if there had been but ten righteous persons in it, *Gen.* 18. 32.

A. But he hath not bound himself by a Law, to deal with all other places according to that rate,

6. That Professors do pray.

A. They may ask, and not have: *1. John* 5. 14, 15. *Jam.* 4. 3. If thou dost regard iniquity in thy heart, the Lord will not hear thee, *Psal.* 66. 18. O but our forms of godliness are long and beautiful.

A. Forms never brought any man to Heaven, nor never will, without the power of Godliness: and this is part of those perillous times wherein there would be great plenty of such empty and sorry Christians, *2 Tim.* 3. 1, 5. even a brave and Court-like form, is but a brave Bribe: and Gods mouth will not be stoppt, nor his hand staid with Bribes: See *Marg.* 94. 95, 96. &c. 101, 102, 103.

169. Ob. But we have prevailed for peace already.

A. Friends, ye have heard of a *Lightning before Death*, and Learned men do account the long-continued stillness of the Air, a forerunner and sign of an Earthquake following it. Let my counsel be acceptable to you: be thankful for what ye have, and amend whatsoever is amiss; that it may be the lengthening of your tranquillity. For God hath sometimes deferred the punishment of those who have sinned against him, for a time in such a manner, that in the holy Scriptures it is called a pardon, and yet for all that, in due time hath punished them; as the *Israelites*, *Num.* 14. 20, 21, 22, 23. *Psal.* 99. 8. *Exod.* 32. 34 35.

7. But some peradventure think, God will spare them, that they may teach their children Religion, &c.

A. Verily some Professors do bestow little care or pains on this business.

170. 8. But we have many Professors to stand in the gap, to keep our Gods wrath, *Ezek.* 22. 30, 31.

A. But sometimes God is weary of repenting, as he was, *Jer.* 15. 6. There is a time, when the wrath of the Lord doth arise against his people, untill there is no remedy, *2 Chron.* 36. 16, 17. &c. When if *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* were in the Land, they should deliver but their own souls by their own righteousness; no not so much as their own Sons or Daughters, *Ezek.* 14. 14. to 20. yea, God did forbid *Jeremy* to pray for the *Jews*, chap. 7. 16. and 11. 14. and 14. 11. and I remember Dr. *Usher*, the Bishop of *Armagh*, told Mr. *Froyle* and me

in Oxford, when the Scots were in New-castle, that his heart was bound up (as he called it) when he went to pray for England. (Take heed therefore to your spirits in your prayers.) Although some of them who seemed to be somewhat, have done enough of late to strike them out of the gap (as David once did, 2 Sam. 24. 1.) yet, I hope, we have still some *Intercessors*, which are of great power with God, and do pray unto him with all their might: but how long they will be able to hold his hands from striking us, who knows? For, I know not; but this I know, that it would be wisdom in us, to increase the number of our *Intercessors*, lest there should be too few of them, as there were too few righteous persons in Sodom to keep it from destruction.

9. But God did help Professors, when Professors were as poorly reformed, as Professors be now. 171

A. That I know not; but this I know; that if Professors now be not more reformed, than they were in 1640. and 1641. then our iniquity is greated by Gods waiting, and by the cords of love, and whips of correction, and by the good preaching, which he hath bestowed upon us; and so greater than the iniquity of Professors in those years was. And wouldst thou have the great God, who formed the spirit of man within him, and before whom all Nations are as nothing; wouldst thou have him stoop again to thee, who art but dust and ashes, and, it may be, a great sinner? Beware of stinking pride, and of stubbornness; which is, as Idolatry, 1 Sam. 15. 23.

10. But Isa. 59. 16. When there was no Intercessor, then.

A. What then? Take heed of misconstruing and abusing this and other Scriptures to thy own hurt, and the hurt of the Church of God: The words are meant not of men, who should intercede with God for his people, but of men who should stand up and bestir themselves to bring things to a better order: men of which sort we now want, ver. 4. And if they were to be understood otherwise, yet it would be a very base part in us not to reform our doings, and a foolish part, without that, to trust to God for the bettering of our Estate, when we have no promise of it.

Obj. But God hath said, he will never leave us, nor forsake us, Heb. 13. 5. and that all things do work together for good to them who love God, Rom. 8. 28.

A. See, that thou be such a one indeed. But if God hath given thee a new spirit, yet thou maist suffer much; it may be more than thou art willing to suffer; before thy afflictions prove beneficial to thee: and God saith, that if he shall speak concerning a Nation to build and plant it, that, if it shall do evil in his sight and not obey his voice;

that then *he will repent of the good, wherewith he said he would bless them*, Jer. 18. 7, 8, 9, 10.

11. But some peradventure will tell me of the Resurrection of the two witnesses, *Rev. 11. 11.* of the fall of *Babylon*, *Rev. 14. 8.* of the fifth *Monarchy*, *Dan. 2. 34, 35. &c.* of *Alsted's Northern Empire or Monarchy*, which God (he saith) will set up in the *North* by the *North-ern Lion*, *2 Esd. 11. 37. &c.* and *21. 1. to 32. &c.* of the *new Jerusalem*, of *Alsted's milium seculum*, the 1000 years, &c. and *O how happy shall the Saints be in those days!*

A. The *Greek word Rev. 11. 7.* signifies to finish, fill up, consummate, perfect: and I dare not peremptorily affirm, that our *Ministers* have finished and perfected their testimony, till they have witnessed against Professors, especially those of their own way, in another gates manner than many of us yet have done.

2. According to *Alsted*, the three years and a half will end, and the 1000 years begin in 1694.

3. Beside whom, Learned *Mayer* is one who doth not interpret the three *Greek Letters* wherewith the 14 chap. of the *Revelation* is ended, 666. as the year of the fall of *Babylon*, but to signifie, who the *Antichrist* is.

174 4. Howsoever, I would have thee to fear, (as our last Translators have translated, *2 Sam. 5. 8.*) that the *blind and the lame shall not come into the house*, and to be prepared as the holy City, as a Bride adorned for her Husband, *Rev. 21. 2.* and not to content thy self with *Horace's one or two fair and far-shining patches of purple*, nor to continue blind or lame enough to be kept out of the *new Jerusalem* by the *Angel-Porters* (which, it may be, would be grievous to thy spirit.)

175 5. I would also have thee consider, that if there shall be any general exaltation of the best *Christians* before the descending of the *New Jerusalem*, yet thou maist come short of it, and that if thou shalt be equal to others in worldly things, yet God is able to send thee such sorrow with them, as may make them bitter enough to thee, till thou hast cast away thy *Pride*, and the rest of thy sins, as a menstrous-cloth, and said unto them *get ye hence*, *Es. 30. 22, 23. &c.* Gods dealings with us, are (to me) as it I heard him say, how muchsoever I have hitherto spared you, *I will no longer content my self with halving and half turn,* with an *overly, slight or partial Reformation*: I will have you neither go backward, nor stand at a stay, but go forward, and reform universally. *Sin no more therefore, lest worse things come unto you*, *Johny. 14. On*

176 One or two peradventure, will be so humble and open-hearted, as to say: but alas, Sir, I cannot reform my heart and inside to the height

A. Like enough, if thou be a new creature. For a poor man doth ever and anon, almost daily, find somewhat wanting in his house: and so doth he who is poor in spirit, in his soul, *Mat. 5. 3.* Howsoever reform the outside, the *Apparel and (called) ornaments of thy body*, and thy outward conversation, and do whatsoever thou canst to thy inward man, and contribute what thou art able to the Reformation of others: especially of thy own Family, (*1 Tim. 5. 8.*) and pray unto him who made thy heart, to reform thy heart, and to prosper thy godly enterprizes, &c. But Friends, many of us have much pride; they are (too) high minded, and too jolly, jocund, and jovial, to be of great power with God, and to be exalted. I beseech and exhort you therefore by the Lord Jesus, cast away your pride, and carnal joviality and merriments, *177 Jam. 4. 9.* For if we do not humble our selves very low voluntarily, I fear, we shall be brought very low by compulsion.

1. Now it is your duty, to humble your selves and to be humble, even clothed with humility, and to walk humbly with God and men, *Isa. 68. Jam. 4. 10. Eph. 4. 2. Col. 3. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6. Phil. 2. 3.*

2. Humility is taught us also by the practise and examples of Abraham, the Father of the faithful, *Gen. 18. 22.* Moses the servant of the Lord, *Num. 12. 3.* Aaron, the Saint of the Lord, *Lev. 10. 3.* David, a man after Gods own heart, *Psal. 131. 1, 2. Asaph Psal. 73. 32. Agur, Prov. 30. 2, 3. John Baptist, Mat. 3. 4, 14. John 1. 27. the Centurion Mat. 8. 5 to 13. the Canaanitish woman, Mat. 15. 22. &c. the twenty four Elders, Rev. 4. 10, 11, and 19. 4. yea of the Lord and Prince of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, *Zeck. 9. 9. Mat. 11. 29. & 21. 5. John 13. 4, 5, 6. Phil. 2. 1. to 10.* Is humility thy duty, and shall all these, such as these, be humble, and so humble, and wilt thou keep thy whole stock of Pride? God forbid.*

3. God is as it were, at cost with men, he chastiseth and punisheth *178* them to humble them, *Lam. 3. 19. 30.* and our low estate at this time calls for it, and not for pride and stateliness.

4. The benefit of humility is great. 1. With the lowly is wisdom, *Prov. 11. 2.* 2. It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, then to divide the spoil with the proud, *Prov. 16. 19.* 3. God will look and have respect to the humble, *Psal. 138. 6. Es. 66. 2.* 4. The high and holy One, who dwelleth in the high and holy place, he dwells also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the heart of the contrite one, *Isa. 57. 15.* 5. God giveth grace to the humble, *Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.* 6. Whoso humbleth himself under the mighty hand of God (aright) shall be exalted, *Jam. 4. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6.* 7. Before honour goes humility, *Prov. 15. 33.* 8. God will

will hear the prayers of the humble, *Psal.* 10. 17. 9. He will save them, *Job* 22. 29. 10. By humility and the fear of the Lord is *Riches, and Honour, and Life*, *Prov.* 22. 4. 11. Humble and meek persons are blessed, *Mat.* 5. 3, 5. *John* 13. 17. 12. Ye may do well, to consider, how favourably and bountifully, God hath dealt with men and women of old in relation to their humility and humiliation, as with the *Israelites*, *1 Sam.* 7. 6. to 13. *Hezekiah*, *2 Chr.* 31. 26. *M. nasseh*, chap. 33. 12, 13. *Josiah*, chap. 34. 27, 28. *Isaiah*, 179 chap. 6. 5, &c. and the Prodigal Son, *Luke* 15. 17, 18, 19. to 24. On the contrary part, concerning pride and proud persons. 1. It is not good, *1 Cor.* 5. 6. 2. It is prohibited, *Rom.* 11. 18, 20. *1 Cor.* 4. 6. 3. We ought not to be proud of the good things which we have, because we have received them all of God, *1 Cor.* 4. 7. 4. Pride is re-
 180 proved, *Mat.* 23. 8, 10. 5. Wise *Agur* prays against it, *Prov.* 30. 7, 8, 9. 6. The soul of a proud man is not upright, *Hab.* 2. 4. 7. The evils of it are many. 1. It engenders strife, *Prov.* 13. 10. and stubbornness, and very many sins. 2. If thou be proud, thou art an abomination to the LORD, *Prov.* 10. 5. 3. Thou canst not walk with God (for he that desires to walk with him, must humble himself, that he may walk with him, *Mic.* 6. 8. Consider the Margent :) neither will God walk with thee, but know thee afar of, as one whom he abhorreth, *Psal.* 138. 6. 4. God resisteth the proud, *Jam.* 4. 6. 5. Brings punishment on them, if ever so many of them be joyned together, *Prov.* 16. 5. 6. Brings them down, *2 Sam.* 22. 28. *Psal.* 18. 27. *Mark* 9. 35. and 7. Disappoints them of their imaginations, desires, purposes, and hopes, *Luke* 1. 51. The pride of their hearts shall deceive them, as it did the *Edomites*, *Obad.* ver. 3. 8. When pride cometh, then cometh shame, *Prov.* 11. 2. 9. It goeth before a fall, even before destruction, *Pr.* 18. 12. and 15. 25. as it did before the fall of *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Dan.* 4. 37. and *Belshazzar*, *Dan.* 5. 22. &c. 10. Can a man hope that God will hear the prayers which he makes with a proud heart? May not the voice of his proud heart be louder, than the voice of his Eloquent Tongue? 11. Whether much pride and much carnal jollity in the heart of an afflicted person, be not always joyned with the contempt or despising of the Lords chastening? *Prov.* 3. 11. if it be not, what is it, to despise his chastening? 12. Whether God may not justly answer such a one, that he is merry and pleasant enough already, &c. Lastly, to set contraries near one
 181 another; The LORD hath respect to the lowly, but the proud he knoweth afar of, *Psal.* 138. 6. (Surely he scorneth the scorner, but he giveth grace to the lowly, *Pr.* 3. 34. Before destruction the heart is haughty, and before

Honour is Humility. Prov. 18. 12. *Whoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he who shall humble himself, shall be exalted,* Mat. 23. 12. 182
God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble, Jam. 4. 6. Friend,
 some of the Christians of Corinth were proud of their spiritual gifts,
 and of their Ministers, 1 Cor. 5. 2. and Paul foretold, that in the per-
 rillous times of the last daies, there would be Formalists, which would
 be proud, high-minded, boasters, &c. 2 Tim. 3. 1. &c. and, if thou be
 one of them, how canst thou hope, that God will hear thy prayers
 (yea, long and fine prayers;) when thou askest that which would en-
 crease or occasion an encrease of that evil thing in thy soul, whereof
 thou hast too much already; I mean, askest worldly prosperity, which
 occasions pride, Psal. 73. 5, 6. Deut. 8. 11, 12, 13, 14. & 32. 15
 2 Chron. 26. 16. Nab. 9. 28. Hos. 13. 6. Thou shouldest rather
 think, thou wantest more affliction, to beat down thy pride, and think,
 if God doth not hate but love thee, that he will in faithfulness add to thy
 afflictions, as he did upon that score afflict the Psalmist, Psal. 119. 75. 183
 rather than exalt thee, which might prove thy utter undoing, &c. This
 also, I would have you all take good notice of; that there are six
 things which are kinds, parts or companions of Humility, without
 which, or any of them, your Humility is not altogether such as it ought
 to be, viz. 1. To submit your selves to God, as to be really content
 to forsake all your sins, and to do whatsoever he requireth of you;
 2. To leave yourselves wholly to God (Psal. 10. 14.) saying unto
 him with the whole heart concerning all earthly things, yea and
 all spiritual things also, which are not of absolute necessity to
 salvation: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt, Mat.
 16. 39. 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 25, 26. Ait. 20. 23, 24.
 3. To entertain the wrath of God, and rage of men, with a calm
 and quiet spirit, and without hard thoughts of God, Jam. 4. 7. Ait.
 5. 41. & 7. 60. & 16. 25. 1 Pet. 2. 23. 4. To esteem those whom ye 184
 account godly, better than your selves, and by love to serve one
 another, by doings, when need is, the meanest offices one for another,
 Phil. 2. 3. Gal. 5. 13. learn the meaning and extent of those two ver-
 ses, (which some Expositors will not shew you. 5. To accept of the
 punishment of thine iniquity; and that not in words only, but with
 the whole heart; acknowledging, that thou hast walked contrary to
 God, and that God hath walked contrary to thee, and chastized thee
 for thy sins; and that thou hast merited at his hands, far sorer punish-
 ments, than he hath laid upon thee, &c. and to do all this with the whole
 heart. See Lev. 26. 41. 2 Chron. 12. 6. Ezra 9. 5. &c. Neh. 9. 33.
 Mat. 7. 2. 6. Whatsoever good things thou hast, or good works thou
 dost,

- dost, to give the glory, with the whole heart, to God, *1 Chron. 29. 10. &c. Ait. 12. 21, 22, 23.* But to get humility, to make thee yield
- 185 and stoop to God, and to walk humbly with God and men, *1. Consider seriously; 1. The infinite dignity and worthiness of God; his infinite greatness, holiness, wisdom and power, and his perfect justice, and his great bounty toward thee, 2. Thy being dust and ashes, and thy sinfulness, and what thou hast deserved time after time by breaking his holy, just and good Law. 3. What I have already said of pride and humility. 4. Look not (too much) on thy own (good) things (graces and spiritual gifts,) nor further than thou hast good cause, on the sins and defects of others. 5. Look on the good things of others, Phil. 2. 4. 6. Know also, and consider, that, to say within thy heart; As things be, or, are like to be, it will be a wiser part in me, to keep this or that sin, than to keep God's commandment, wherein he forbids it; to say this in thy heart at any time whatsoever, is to make thy self (as we use to speak) wiser than God (to prefer thy wisdom before the wisdom of God:) which is horrible pride. And yet this thou sayest with thy heart (and God hears its voice) whensoever, after considerable deliberation, thou art resolved to transgress the Law of God, Mark 6. 26. And if any*
- 186 *man thinks, his love toward God is great, notwithstanding his dissolute conversation; to such a man I say, Go and learn: for thy love is no larger, than thy obedience. 7. converse much with humble persons. 8. Pray unto him who is able; to cloath thee with humility. 9. Decline no mans company for fear he should reprove thee for thy pride, but if there be any man near thee, who is likely to tell thee of it, be*
- 187 *sure to converse much with him. Brethren, the pride, and I fear, the proud Apparel and ornaments of some of our Intercessors, at least Professors, did hinder them from making up the Hedge, and thrust and keep them out of the Gap; so that they could not stand there before the LORD; and that thereupon the Pestilence did enter into London; and that the sinful dumbness (Ezek. 3. 26.) or silence and Gallant-like ornaments of some others, did strike or keep them out of the Gap, and that thereupon so many houses were fired in London. (If any of you do not understand my language, let them consider, (together with the pride and other sins of Professors) these Scriptures, 1 Tim. 2. 9. Ezek. 23. 30, 31. 2 Sam. 24. 1. &c. Jer. 7. 18. Ezek. 13. 5. Ezek. 3. 36.*
- 188 *Which fear of mine, whether it be altogether right or not; howsoever (ye know, that) some men (and women) be of great power with God (Gen. 32. 24. &c. Hos. 12. 3, 4. Exod. 32. 10. &c. Ezek. 14. 14. Jam. 5. 16, 17.) and that the Professors have not yet prevailed with God, to destroy any of the Plows, but only to stop the hirsers, &c. &c.*

vers, &c. Psal. 129. 3, 4. So that (for ought ye know) the *Plows* be
 not yet legally destroyed for lack of more *Intercessors*, (as *Sodom* was
 destroyed for want of a few more righteous persons; at the most
 not above nine, *Gen. 18. 32.* And would it be wisdom in us, to suffer
England to be destroyed, or the *Plows* to be drawn over the backs of
Professors again, for want of more power with God? *Gen. 32. 24.*
Hos. 12. 4. Not so, Friends, I pray you, but as, when the *Harvest* is
 plentiful, and the *Labourers* few, we must pray the Lord of the *Har-*
vest, to send forth *Labourers* into his *Harvest*, *Mat. 9. 37, 38.* So
 when there is need of great strength, by which we may have power with
 God; then it stands us upon, (even for our own sakes) to turn as many as
 we can, to righteousness, and to wind up as many as we can, to a ve-
 ry great height of faith and holiness; that they may be *Princes* and
 men of great power with God; that they may prevail with him for
 themselves, and the household of Faith. For we know not, how much
 help we have need of, and a little true strength will help somewhat:
 But the truth is; as in the Reign of *Hezekiah*, the *Levites* were more
 189
upright in heart, to sanctifie themselves, than the Priests, 2 Chron. 29. 34.
 So some of our *Jacob-like plain men* (*Gen. 25, 27.*) may by their pray-
 ers prevail more with God, than some of our *fine-tongued men*, who
 to some seem to be *Princes and Pillars*. Not very long since, many *Pro-*
 190
fessors did slight, and make small account of the *Old-Testament-*
Saints, and of the old *Puritans* of *England*: I would to God, we had
 many more such, as many of them were: For many are called, but few
 chosen. *Mat. 20. 16.* and of them who are chosen, few are *Princes*
 with God. Friends, I have now in part shewn you, what (notwith-
 standing the free grace of God) is the best way to kill the devil: I be-
 seech you therefore, even all *Professors*, by the mercies of God, at all
 times, in the day time, in the night, when ye are at home, when a-
 broad, when alone, when in company, when alone with God, re-
 member the *Reformation* of *Professors*, and, to the uttermost of thy du-
 ty and opportunities, do whatsoever thou canst, (I speak to every
 one of you in particular) by instructing, exhorting, admonishing, re-
 proving, encouraging, in preaching, in conference, in prayer, and by
 being a holy and good example to others, to reform and amend thy
domesticks (children, servants, &c.) brethren and sisters, parents, near neigh-
 bours, inferiours, &c. and universally all the *Professors* of *England*: To
 enliven the dead, and awaken them who sleep, to open the ears of the
 deaf, and the eyes of the blind, to heal and strengthen the feeble legs,
 arms and hands of the lame and lamish, to lift up the hands which
 are down, to quicken *slow-bellies*, and to stop the mouths of unruly

191 and vain talkers. Consider therefore *your ways*, Hag. 1. 4, 5, 6. that is, what you have done, and how; and what you have left undone, and the issue of all. (This consideration is required especially in a time of Adversity, Eccl. 7. 14.) And, consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works; Heb. 10. 24. and to dehorte from unfit deeds and speeches. (For many do look on some of their own sins, as no sins, &c.)

And do this for women as well as men: for women have souls to save, as well
192 as men; though many of them walk, as if they had not. If the Humiliation, Reformation, Prayers and Families of Professors generally, were such as they ought to be; their Humiliation real, serious, extraordinary; their Reformation extended to all their doings; their prayers effectual fervent prayers; and their Families like little Churches. O what a heavenly and blessed sight would this be? And then we might with some confidence expect a great exaltation of Professors, yea and a happy echange of the Nation also. But, until I know or hear of a greater Reformation of Professors, or of greater care taken, and fitter means used to reform them, then I yet know or hear of; (although I know as much of God's power and free grace, as some other Professors do; yet) I cannot expect, to have Professors greatly exalted: but I hope many of you henceforth will do, as I desire to do for my part, even make use of their Talents or Mites, to work out that blessed Reformation. I beseech you therefore, Friends, every one of you, to hate
193 all kinds of sin, and to reform your own doings unreservedly, and wishal to do, what ye can, to reform the behaviour of all others, especially each one of you, of his own Wife, Husband, Children, Servants, and of all, to whom he or she is joyned by any special bond, natural, Ecclesiastical, or civil. Is there not a cause of doing thus? Verily there is very great cause: For it is, to do and endeavour to do most excellent works, and pleasing to the Almighty, conducing much to his honour, and the good of his Church, and of the persons whom we seek to reform, yea and to our own good also, who seek to reform them. For he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins, Jam. 5. 20. And the greater the number of them that pray in faith, is, and the more reformed and holy they be, the more prevalent and available with God
194 their prayers be, Jam. 5. 15, 16. and (if I mistake not, nay, I do not mistake) the pestilence, sword and guns, and other plagues, and the dangers, fears and losses of Professors, all these have lately called on us Professors, and are still calling on us, to pray in as much faith and humility and holiness as we possibly can: the (serious) consideration whereof ought to excite us, to reform our selves, and all that are within

our gates, or under our authority, and as many as we can, of those who are not; that we may prevail with the Almighty for our own good, and the good of the Nation. Now to stir you up, and to encourage 195 you to contribute, what ye can, to this great work of reforming Professors. I pray, consider; 1. That it is your duty, *Heb. 10. 24.* and 3. 12, 13. 2. What it is, to convert a man or a woman from the error of his or her way? *James, Chap. 5. 19, 20.* tells you, in so doing, ye shall save a soul from death, and bide a multitude of sins, I may well add, and do *Jesus Christ and his Church* good service. 3. That since the beginning of this Revolution unto this day, the work of reforming Professors and their Families, hath prospered so little, that it doth not make a great noise in my years: and that, as during part of this time, it hath grown worse and worse with Professors in respect of their liberty and peace, and the means of grace and comfort; so there is no certainty of the continuance of the present stillness, &c. 4. That men of great power with God may prevail with him for a time, whole prayers, after a while, will be of no force. For *Amos*, after the *Grasshoppers* had eaten up the grass of the latter growth, then he prevailed with God, to put an end to that plague, and afterward, when the fire, by which the Lord contended; had devoured a part, he prevailed with him, to cease that plague also: but after that, when the Lord would plague *Israel* in a third way, then he did not prevail with him, *Amos 7. 1. to 9.* so that it is still high time for us, to consider our ways, *Hag. 1. 5, 6, 7.* and to consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works, *Heb. 10. 24.* and to do what we can, for our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and his Religion and people; and high time for every godly Minister to trust in God, and to cry aloud, to lift up his voice like a Trumpet, and to shew Professors their Transgressions, *Ila. 58. 1.* Now 196 for you, my brethren, that take upon you to preach to Professors, this word is for you. Whose hearts, tongues and feet should be most forward, earnest and active in this business? Should not ours, who are by our Office and Calling, *Christ's Stewards, Watchmen, Overseers, Rulers?* Why then should ye not all be busie in it, for *Christ and his Church*: even for the enlarging and strengthening of *Christ's* kingdom, and the bettering of the state of his people? Whose servants are ye? Are ye not *Christ's* for the good of his Church? *Eph. 1. 22.* I pray, read and con- 197 sider, what use ye ought to make of *Mal. 2. v. 1, 2, 8, 10, 13.* and *Jer. 1. 17.* where the Lord said unto *Jeremy*; *Speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.* And, what hath God commanded you to speak unto Professors? He tell you; even that which he hath taught *Prophets, Apostles,*

posles, and Spiritual Teachers of old to speak unto such *Israelites* and *Christians*, as were guilty of such sins and failings as *Professors* are now guilty of. Some of you know, the *Quakers* have reproached us with making a Trade of preaching: and truly some amongst us in the time of the Interruption did make a very Trade of it, and some did drive a very great Trade of it: (whose fault was that?) and, it may be, some of us at this time are too like those Tradesmen, that are too willing to please their Customers. I pray you, let us leave of this Trading: Brethren, I request and exhort you, by the Lord Jesus, do all that ye can to deserve the Character which Paul gives himself, *2 Thes. 2.* to declare the free grace of God, so as to win souls to Christ, and to draw and drive Professors out of their sins. Shew not your selves miserable Comforters, and Physicians of no value, healing Professors wounds slightly, (*Jer. 6. 14. Ezek. 13. 10.* Covering them with fig-leaves, or drawing a poor thin skin over them, without healing them soundly at the bottom. *Sathie* not your selves with general or dark speeches (flatterers and deceitful workers do content themselves with such;) but descend unto particulars, and deal home and plainly with Professors concerning their sins. We have indeed given forth our Testimony (*Rev. 11. 3. &c.*) (many of us very poorly) against *Papery* and other enormities not a few, in our Sermons and Books and in dying, &c. but it may be, God will not look on us, as Witnesses that have completed and perfected our testimony, till we have testified faithfully and plainly against the *Worldliness, Pride, Curiosity, Vanity, Conforming to the World, Fashion-monging, and other Vices* of Professors. Moreover, be not like those Surgeons and Physicians, that do protract and lengthen their Cures, to fill their purses: do not ye, I mean, withhold bitter Medicines and sharp Corrosives from your Patients diseased and infirm souls longer than true Christian wisdom allows you, but, in respect of time and all other respects, shew your selves really faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ and to his members, as men who watch for their souls, and as they that must give account, *Heb. 13. 17.* As for the itching ears, whereof Paul prophecyed, *2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.* if there be any such things among your Hearers; let it not be any part of your business to tickle them with fine, neat, trim, ornate, curious words and expressions, but feed them with the sincere milk (and strong meat) of the word, which they ought to desire, that they may grow thereby (in the knowledge of spiritual things and in grace) *1 Pet. 2. 2.* and content your selves with a manly kind of Eloquence. Imitate the blessed and wise Apostle Paul, whom God sent to preach the Gospel, not with wisdom of words; not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power,

1 Cor. 1. 17. chap. 2. 1, 4. And of this matter, as Paul seems to speak 200
 so much of it, because it was the manner of the ambitious Teachers in the
 Church of Corinth, to use such enticing speech, to draw Disciples after
 them; so I, brethren, have spoken and do now write so much of it,
 because Satan hath (since the death of Mr. Latimer) (with the help of
 men-pleasing, Gal. 1. 10.) increased in the hearts even of Professors and
 religious preachers, a carnal affectation of dainty and finely-filed phrases and
 expressions in a very great measure, and screwed such fine phrases and
 expressions into Sermons, (which do obscure the Doctrine and occa-
 sion too much meditation, &c.) Nay Satan hath screwed them into
 our very prayers; as if the ancient of dayes (Dan. 7. 22.) were become a
 a weak old man, to be overcome with Court-like Complements;
 wherewith indeed he is no more taken, than he would be with the neck
 of a Dog, Es. 66. 2, 3. And if many of your fine phrases be Scripture 201
 phrases; why, the Quakers do rail on holy and profitable Ministers
 with Scripture-phrases. Brethren, I thank God, that I have learned
 of him, to abhor this ambitious and polluting ornament of our Sermons
 and prayers, as a great enemy to our Saviour and his Church, and to poor
 miserable sinners: and I pray you, cease from hunting after words, and
 from studying words too much, and your Hearers, and matter too little;
 but for the honor of God and the good of his Church, contend with all
 your might, and in all wisdom, against the vices and sins of Profes-
 sors. And to encourage you hereunto; know, that it is not so long
 since, that a very unfit manner of preaching being taken up and much
 used in the University of Oxford, Bishop Usher, and Bishop Potter did
 preach it down, and destroy it. And Doctor Hoskins, a Conformist,
 but learned, and godly, and wise, taking notice, that some came with
 naked breasts to his Lecture in the Minster of Hereford, did so dis-
 course against that ugly and immodest spectacle, that they ceased to 202
 offend his eyes with it. I come now, to shew you all, as near as I
 can, the fittest way and means of reforming your selves and other Pro-
 fessors, even the best directions and instructions that I am able, con-
 cerning that necessary and blessed work. And first, take due care to 203
 find out thy own sins. And here 1. Enter upon that business, with a
 strong resolution, whatsoever (seeming good) Fruits any of thy sins
 have yielded thee, yet to leave them all, as thou shalt take notice of
 them without any exception or reservation, John 7. 17. 2. Consider the
 Fruits of the Spirit, and the works of the Flesh, and the Garments,
 Armour, and sins mentioned in Mat. 15. 19. Mark 7. 21, 22. Rom. 1.
 29, 30, 31, 32. Rom. 12. 2, 9. to the end of the Chapter, Rom. 13. 13,
 13, 14. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 7. 11. and 13. 20, 22. Gal. 5. 19. to the
 end

end of the ch. *Eph.* 4. 1, 2, 3, 21. to the end of the Chapter, and 5. 1. to 7. *Phil.* 2. 2, 3, 4, 5. &c. and 3. 3. *Col.* 3. 5. to 14. and 4. 5, 6, 17. *1 Thes.* 5. 12. to 22. *2 Tim.* 3. 1. to 7. *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. *Jam.* 1. 26, 27. and 2. 1. and 3. 1. and 4. the whole Chapter, *1 Pet.* 1. 17. and 2. 1, 2. and 3. 8, 9, 10, 11. *2 Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 10. &c. 2, 7, 8. and 3. 17, 18. *1 John* 3. 3, 14, 16, 17, 18. *John* 9. 10. *Rev.* 21. 8. as also *1 Pet.* 3. 1. to 7. and *1 Tim.* 2. 8, 9.

104 10. Some of you may do well to peruse Mr. *Byfields* Catalogue of sins, or some book like that. 3. Consider the wayes of thy heart and thy outwards carriage toward God and man in thy younger and elder yeats, before and since thy marriage, at home and abroad, in publick and privately, in company of godly and graceless persons, when a Servant or a Master of servants, toward inferiours, Superiours, and equals, godly and ungodly persons, Friends and Enemies, &c. 4. Call to mind (as far forth as ye can) *What the Lord hath spoken to you* concerning the sins of Professors by me face to face and by others. For he hath spoken unto some of you by me in *London, Brisfow, Essex, Hertford, &c.* and to some of you, of (called) *small sins, and sins about Apparel and other things indifferent*, and to some of you of *such sins* as cause

205 *the destruction of most of those Professors that are damned.* 5. Compare what ye have heard and read, and the behaviour of the best Scripture and modern Saints with your own deeds, speeches, gestures, and thoughts, to discern the agreement and disagreement that is between them, &c. 6. Because it is *not an easie matter* for a man to find out his sins, *Psal.* 119. 96. *Psal.* 19. 12. therefore pray ye unto God, to reveal your sins to you. 7. Imitate *David*, *Psal.* 141. 5. *request* thy fellow-Professors to tell thee of them, and converse much with such as are likely to tell thee of them: and, when thou art told of any of them, esteem it a kindness, and *give thanks to God and man*, *1 Sam.* 25. 32, 33. 8. Consider, what it is, to *make straight paths for thy feet*, *Heb.* 12. 13. *to walk accurately, precisely, circumspectly*, *Eph.* 5. 15. and to be perfect, *Mat.* 5. 48. *2 Cor.* 13. 11. 9. Consider, how many ways *the Lords day* may be profaned and mispent, and how oft thou hast profaned and mispent *part of it*. 10. Consider, how many ways ye have made your selves partakers of other folks sins, and how the Children of *Israel* were guilty of the sin of *Achan*, *Josh.* 7. 1. &c. 11. It may be thou maist do well, to mind some of their faults, *partly to the end, thou maist hear of thy own.* For some will be most likely to mind thee of thine, when thou mindest them of theirs. 12. When thou art so happy, as to *hear Christ speaking unto thee* by such a Preacher as Mr. *Wroth* was, do what thou canst, to be where he may take good notice of thee; that, if there be any *Faults* in thy conversation, he may mind thee

thee of it. For I remember upon a time, when Mr. *Cradock* and I heard Mr. *Wroth*, Mr. *Cradock* stood just before him, and after told me, he had done it, because he knew, if Mr. *Wroth* had taken notice of any Fault in his behaviour, he would have minded him of it before he had ended his Sermon. 13. When thou art rebuked for any sin, take good heed of justifying or excusing thy self further then thou canst shew some very sufficient cause; lest thy Friend be discouraged from doing the part of a faithful Friend to thee another time, *Psal.* 119. 75. *Prov.* 27. 5, 7.

(2.) Stir up in your hearts a comfortable expectation of better times, and a holy desire of the Churches welfare, and zeal for Christs honour. This may move you, to be the more serious diligent and in amending, every one himself and others, as many as he can.

3. If thou dost desire to be exalted; be humble and resolve strongly (by Gods help) to walk humbly, when thou shalt be exalted. How to get humility, see before *Marg.* 185.

4. Acknowledge and bewail thy spiritual weakness and want of ability to reform thy self without the strength of Christ, *John* 15. 5. *1 Cor.* 3. 5. and seek unto God for strength.

5. Stir up your selves to trust in our Lord Jesus Christ for his assistance, and for good success in seeking to reform, *Mat.* 28. 20. and let prayer be joyned with every part of it, *Phil.* 1. 19. and 4. 13. &c. yea request others also, to pray for the same.

6. Hear gladly Ministers of reproof, *Ezek.* 3. 26. I mean, such as will reprove the sins of Professors, &c.

7. Harken to the word of the Kingdom attentively, and consider it seriously, and be sure to take good notice of thy own portion, especially, if it doth concern the reforming of any part of thy behaviour.

8. Use all good means to nourish Faith. For that is of very great use and force in this business, *Acts* 15. 9. *Gal.* 5. 6. *1 John* 3. 3. and 5. 4, 5.

9. Quench not the good motions which the Holy Ghost is pleased to stir up, time after time in thy heart, *1 Thes.* 5. 19. especially desires to have thy corruptions mortified, and purposes to strive against them, but do what thou canst by reading, meditation, conference and prayer, to nourish, augment, and strengthen them.

10. Pray unto the Almighty earnestly to strengthen thee with strength in thy soul, *Psal.* 138. 3. and to cleanse thee from secret Faults, *Psal.* 19. 12.

11. Compare thy wayes with the ways of the best Saints, living and dead, especially of Jesus Christ, *Mat.* 11. 20. *1 John* 3. 3. and let the

the Lord alwaies before thy eyes, &c. This may excite thee, to imitate, &c. Consider well, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *Isa. 6. 1. to 8.*

12. Take heed continually to thy wayes, according to the word of God, *Psal. 119. 9.* Be sober and watchful, *Luke 21. 34. 1 Pet. 5. 8.* and, when evil motions do arise in thy heart, *deny them speedily, Tit. 2. 11, 12.* Practise this, I pray thee.

13. Make use of these Scriptures, *Heb. 12. 13. Eph. 5. 15, 16. Mat. 5. 48. 2 Cor. 13. 11.*

14. For the meaning and use of these Directions, let such as doubt, enquire of able Ministers.

15. Of some special Meetings, what is fit to be done at them, &c.

- 210 (1) 1. Let Ministers and *some other fit persons* meet sometimes apart by themselves. 2. *Let all these* give due diligence to be *exemplary in their conversation*, to be *excellent* patterns, fit for other Professors to imitate. 3. *At those meetings*, let it be considered; That the carriage of many Professors is so full of *sins of Omission* and commission, that there is just cause of admonishing them thereof, for their own good, God's honour, and the good of the Church; that some of their sins do tend more than others, to God's dishonour, and more discredit Religion, and more provoke God's wrath; that some Professors be blind; some lame, or lamish; some dumb, or as it were tongue-tied; some dull, and heavy, and slow; some proud; some too full of mirth and jollity; some worldly and covetous; some peradventure covetous *three wayes*; some asleep, or not thoroughly awakened; some *stark dead in trespasses and sins*, meer Formalists; and that, for some of these evil qualities some Professors be affected *with* them in a greater measure than others. Also at *such Meetings*, let it be resolved, what fit means shall (God willing) be used by *this company*, to heal and reform such Professors, but to deal with them all, *as their states require*. (See 1 Cor. 4. 21. Eph. 5. 14. 1 Tit. 1. 11, 12, 13. 2 Cor. 13. 2.) and that special care shall be taken, to find out, and quell, and beat down those sins which do most irritate the Almighty, and most weaken and hinder prayers, in regard of the sin it self, or its aggravations, and *that every Professors heart may be set against his dearest sin*; (which is that which he doth most favour, and most spare, and *least*, or not at all strive, wrestle and fight against. To that effect Edward Green; and rightly, *Gal. 5. 17. 1 Pet. 2. 11.*) (which setting of the heart *so against that sin*, is a sign of true grace.) Let it *there also* be concluded, who of these that use to meet with this small company, be fit to be reprov'd or admonish'd, and of what fault, and who of *this*

this small company, shall deal with *M.* and who with *N.* &c. and what, tending to the reformation of Professors, every one of them shall perform, and by what times, and that they will all of them *hearken*, to hear and know the issue of their endeavours, former and latter; (as *Jeremy* did, Chap. 8. 6.) that they may proceed, as there shall be occasion. Let it there also be concluded, that due care shall be taken by this small company to destroy and remove the causes, and occasions of the irregular conversation of Professors; such as are (I think) *ignorance, unfaithfulness, carnal and worldly fear, diffidence, (not trusting in God) carelessness and negligence, (not considering our selves and others, &c.) pride, covetousness, voluptuousness, (not content with enough, &c.) sinful silence, and holding our peace at the fault some of another, like-warmness* and want of zeal for *Christ* and his Church. These are part of the causes, &c. in *Ministers* and others. (Nay, 'tis true.) To which may be added, preaching without due consideration of the Hearers (that's worthy to be mentioned twice) and without due preparation.

And as to Ignorance, my experience and charity tells me, that even some *Preachers* be (in part) ignorant of the doctrine of things indifferent, apparel and ornaments of the body, conformity to the world, appearance of evil, things lovely and of good report, and peradventure of the doctrine of sanctifying the Sabbath, and the use of the Tongue, which yet may be gathered up and understood in and by these Scriptures, *Isa.* 3. 18. &c. *1 Cor.* 11. 14. *1 Tim.* 2. 9, 10. *1 Pet.* 3. 3, 4, 5. *Rom.* 12. 2. *1 Thes.* 5. 22. *Phil.* 4. 8, 9. *Ezra* 20. 8. &c. *Isa.* 58. 13, 14. *Mat.* 12. 36, 37. *1 Cor.* 6. 10. *Eph.* 4. 25, 29, 30, 31. *Jam.* 1. 26. *Rom.* 14. 15. concerning which things very many Professors, and some *Ministers* are faulty.

(2). Let this small company draw to some extraordinary Meetings, as many as they can, of those with whom any of them use to hold ordinary Meetings, whether (in their judgment) as a Church, or not; and (if they judge it convenient) some others also. At which extraordinary Meetings, let some of them declare and publish, that notice is taken of the carriage of many Professors, that it is not such as it ought to be; and that ye who are *Ministers*, have resolved, to endeavour, that those things which are amiss, may be amended, and that they do earnestly desire and request all that are present, to contribute, what they can, every one of them, to the reformation of Professors, especially of those of his or her own society: Whereunto let one of you add an Exhortation, perswading all that are present (as vigorously and effectually as he shall be able) so to do. After which Exhortation,

on, and a prayer suitable to it, *let all that are present, mutually promise and engage, as before the most high God, one to another, every one of them to all the rest, to watch over one another, and to take care one of anothers spiritual estate, dealing one with another concerning it faithfully, and in particular to mind one another of sins and duties, committed or omitted, or to be done, as they shall apprehend to be their duty; as also to take admonitions and reproofs well in worth, and in good part, one from another.* All this may be signified by lifting up the hand, or by any other sign convenient. Also at this Meeting, ye may do well to warn all the company, to amend their wayes, to the uttermost of their knowledge and abilities, and to let them know, that they may expect to have their sins handled and spoken of hereafter (as there is or shall be just causes) both at Meetings and privately, but in a fit manner, and as shall be expedient for the credit of the persons admonished; and that if the Ministers shall understand, that any of them be resolved, and do begin to endeavour to amend any fault, that thenceforth they be not to expect any reproof for that fault.

- 216 (3.) When there is any real Reformation of any Family or person, let hearty thanks be fittingly given by many (with true spiritual joy and gladness in their hearts) to God, who gives the increase to the planters and waterers, *1 Cor. 3. 5, 6, 7. Luke 15. 3. Act. 8. 8.* And let the success encourage you, to go forward with the good work, which ye have in hand, cheerfully.

And now, I beseech all Professors, to enter upon this necessary business of reforming forthwith, (without any procrastination or delay) *Numb. 16. 46, 47, 48.* and to do every part of it (as all works of Religion, and all we do for God, ought to be done) seriously and diligently, and in the fear of God (away with all trifling;) and not to neglect it, till ye have compleated, every one his and her part of it. For ye know not, how soon a prison-house, or fear of it, or the grave
217 may hinder you, *Ecc. 9. 10. Zech. 1. 5.* As for these and the rest of my Instructions, ye may (for many of you are able) amend them, and add to them, and hold them forth to others in a more winning manner, than I have done, unto the exaltation of our great Master *Jesus Christ*, and the benefit of his people: but, I pray you, give me not cause, by your ill dealing with him and them, *to mourn in secret* for your luke-warmness and unfaithfulness, and for the evils which may come to you and yours. For if my counsel be evil in your eyes, I shall look on your not hearkening to it, to do your duty for God and his Church, as a sign of more wrath. But, I hope good things

will be done by very many of you, even things tending to a great and blessed reformation, though I thus speak.

I come now, in the last place, to speak *some what more of reprovings*; 218 and the like, *as one of the Middleses of reforming*; and, although, in some cases, we be bound to reprove them who are not called Professors; yet my business at this time being the amendment of Professors, I shall content my self with this, that Professors ought to reprove Professors for their sins. And this I find to be the duty of Ministers and Preachers, 2 Tim. 4. 2. and of them and other Professors, Lev. 19. 17. Mat. 18. 15. R. And this thou who art a Professor, oughtest to do; 1. For (the sake of) God. To keep thy fellow-Professors from polluting his holy Name, and from grieving his good Spirit, and from disgracing his holy Gospel, Gal. 6. 10. Eccl. 9. 10. Tit. 2. 5, 10. 2. For the good of the Offenders. To convert them from *the errors of their waies*, to hide their sins, and so to *save their souls from everlasting death*, Jam. 5. 20. If they be already in the state 219 of salvation; (*which all Professors are not*) yet this is the way to better their spiritual estate, in respect of their faith, assurance, peace with God, peace with their own consciences, spiritual joy and comfort, and encouragement, Rom. 14. 17. It is the way (if I may so speak) to keep God from looking on them, as his enemies, and from *wounding their very heads*, Ps. 68. 21. It is a good way indeed to encrease their happiness in all respects, Psal. 84. 11. 1 Tim. 4. 8. 3. For the benefit of the Church of God. For the more sinless and pure of life any man is, 1. The better and more holily he can pray, and the more prevalent his prayers will be with God, and consequently the more good he can do to and for God's people, with and by his prayers, Jam. 5. 15, 16. 2. The more exemplary his behaviour is, the more forcible and effectual it will be, to *win others to amend their behaviour*, Mat. 5. 16. 1 Pet. 2. 12. and 3. 1, 2. 3. He is likely to be the more beneficial to *Christ's par-* 220 *ty divers other ways*: which I will leave to your Meditations. 4. It will also be beneficial to thee who art the Reprover. 1. Thou hast done thy duty, and discharged a good conscience; and that is not a *very small matter*, Psal. 119. 55, 56. *Alt.* 24. 16. 2 Cor. 10. 12. 2. To thee shall be *delight, and a blessing of good things shall come upon thee*, Prov. 24. 25. That is, thou shalt be glad, that thou hast kept thy conscience clear, and God will bestow good things of one kind or other on thee: and so some do interpret, Jam. 5. 20. 3. *He who rebuketh a man, shall afterward find more favour, than he who flattereth him with his lips*, Prov. 28. 23. Howsoever, the wounds of a friend are faithful, Prov. 27. 5.

Use. All which notwithstanding, (for I now come to *reprove* for *improving*) it is not an easie thing to find a faithful man, *Prov.* 20. 6. and the duty of *reproving* (as *Mr. E. H.* of *Br.* said) is generally neglected. O how common this sin is! *A.* neglecting the education of his children; *B.* speaks of it *behind his back*, but not a word to his face. *C.* in his prayer at a Meeting, makes such a confession of sins and corruptions, as if the Company were (excepting outward acts of gross sins) the worst persons in all the City, and yet speaks so in his Sermon, as if they had scarce any sin at all, fit to be spoken of. *D.* preacheth of sins, under the notion of *the devils dainties*, and instanceth in none but *oppression*, (of which belike none of the Hearers were guilty.) And *men of dainty expressions* have *florish wisdom* enough, to pass by the sins of their Hearers, and to find out other matters enough to spend the

221 time on. There were of old three sorts of Prophets; *true and faithful Prophets*; *false Prophets*, and *faity Prophets*, *Jer.* 23. 13, 14. to 17. But they also, who are not Preachers, are guilty of much sinful silence; I would have them and the Preachers, to take great heed, lest *Christ*

222 look on them for it, as he did on those, *Mark* 3. 4, 5. with anger. For many professing men and women, through want of due admonition and rebuke, do go on still in their trespasses, to the dishonour of *Christ*, and the grieving of his holy Spirit, and the disgrace of Religion, (even opening the mouths of profane persons, to blaspheme the right wayes of the Lord) and (at least) to the loss and damage (if not utter destruction) of both the parties; of them whose behaviour calls for reproof, and of them that do not pay it, (*1 Cor.* 3. 15.) and to the lengthening of that which we call our afflictions. And is all this nothing to you, who esteem your selves the children of God, and members of *Jesus Christ*, and say, that ye are taught of God, and that *Jesus Christ* loved you, and gave himself for you? Is *Christ's* dishonour, and the polluting of God's name, nothing to you? The grieving of the good Spirit of God, nothing? The discredit of the true Religion, nothing? and the continuance of the Saints afflictions, nothing? Is all this nothing to you? Is it possible, that a man or woman should be a new creature, and not be grieved at the heart, that these things have come to pass through his or her sinful silence? But, O, how few Professors do *duly consider*, of whose sins, and of which

223 of their sins, they be guilty and partakers? *1 Tim.* 5. 22. And from whence comes this our sinful silence? Even from our (carnal) self-love, assiance in men, carnal and worldly fears, and want (at least in part) of love towards God, assiance in God, filial fear of God, and brotherly love towards one another. Consider, I pray you, what I

say, that ye may the more abhor this pernicious kind of silence; and humble your selves for it, and hereafter *not* hold your peace from good and fit words, but, as there is cause and occasion, open your mouths, and reprove, &c. *Apologies*. But here, it may be, these *dumb Professors* (Ezek. 3. 26.) will say; 224

1. One, that reproving belongs to Ministers.

A. But I say, that it appertains also unto them who are not Ministers; as ye may see, *Lev.* 19. 17. *Mat.* 18. 15. *Luke* 17. 3. *1 Thes.* 5. 14. *Heb.* 3. 12, 13. and 10. 24, 25.

2. Another, that he abstains from reproving Professors, because their sins be few or little, and that some of them have but one fault.

A. Indeed, Friend, the Faults of some Professors are many. And for those who have but few; knowest thou not, that, as (a few) *dead flies do cause the ointment of the Apothecary to send forth a stinking savour*: so a little folly doth him who is in reputation for wisdom and honour? *Ecc.* 10. 1. Art thou content, that Professors should *use to trespass* against the most high God in a few little sins? to defile his name whom thou callest thy heavenly Father, *a little*? to grieve his holy spirit *a little*? to disgrace his Gospel *a little*? and to make the ointment and reputation of Professors stink *a little*? yet all this thou art guilty of, *by keeping silence*. Why man, our Lord *Jesus Christ*, being the eternal Wisdom, and the word of God, having against the Angels of the Churches of *Pergamos* and *Thyatira*, against either of them, but a few things, and against the Angel of the Church of *Ephesus* only his *leaving of his first love*; yet he saw cause to reprove them all for their few Faults, as well as to praise them for their good works; as ye may see *Rev.* 2. and also, that *part of their iniquities was the suffering of evil works*. Take heed then, thou be not rent and torn, as accessary to other mens sins, *Hos.* 5. 14. For I have already shewn thee, that *there is no little sin, because there is no little God*. The true God is infinitely great and worthy, and every sin is committed against him; therefore every sin is great. See *Marg.* 30. 31. Moreover, I fear, many Professors do make nothing of some of their little Trespases: and doth not this make them in Gods esteem *far the greater*? Verily it doth. And what do they, that do not reprove them? what do they make of their sins? Truly, *the offender and non-reprover* are in that too like one another. Beside, many little sins do yied but *little (seeming) good fruit*; and that greatens them, that we *dare* trespass against the most high God, and his holy, just, and good Commandments, *for such poor matters*, for trifles. And I have spoken unto you of the Professors, 225
which

which in that great day shall be set on Christs left hand; of the greater part of them, that they shall be *damned for little sins, and sins about things indifferent.* Take heed therefore, ye who use liberty, as an occasion to the flesh, and ye who are silent at such mens sins; take heed, I say, lest ye be torn in pieces together, when there is none to deliver, *Psal. 50. 22.*

- 226 *Repl.* But some Professors use to practise (as far as I see) only one sin; it may be *rotten or frothy talk*: I hope it is *no fault* in me, to let them alone in one sin.

A. No fault? Why man, for how many and what faults did *Jesus Christ* in the time of his low estate, reprove *Martha*? *Lu. 10. 41, 42.* I think, it was not for many, nor for great faults; yet he reprov'd her. And so did God for *one fault*, reprove *Sarah*, *Gen. 18. 15.* &c. and *Jacob*, *Gen. 35. 1.* and *Moses*, and *Aaron*, and *Jehv*, the Prophet *Jehoshaphat*, *2 Chron. 19. 2.* and *Paul*, *Peter*, *Gal. 2. 11.* &c. and an Angel, *Jobv. Rev. 19. 10.* and *22. 9.* Beside 1. It may be, this or that Professor doth practise more sins, than thou knowest of. (He may favour his secret sins.) 2. Being reprov'd for one sin, that reproof may occasion him to take notice of other sins, which thou knowest not of. 3. Howsoever, reproof and instruction concerning one sin, is a good way to keep him from making a Trade of many sins, yea of any one sin. If thou thinkest thy self wiser than *Jehv* the Prophet, and *Paul*; yet take heed of making thyself wiser than *Christ*: for thou must stand before his judgment-seat; and he is a righteous Judge, and will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and condemn (I fear) many Professors for idle words and the like (small) sins, which they do seldom or never particularly grieve for, or confess, and ask pardon of: which is an Argument, that they do in their hearts make small matters of them; and the way (if I may so speak) to make God look on them, as *fool matters*. Which I hold very fit to be thought of, and this also, that it is a very wretched thing for a man who thinks himself wise, to suffer any one of his fellow-Professors to be damned for one sin.

- 227 Another may say, I do say nothing to such a Professor, because he is a *Dog*, or a *Swine*, *Mat. 7. 6.*

A. What a Professor, and a *Dog*, or a *Swine*? Either of these is a very heavy charge, with which we must not without a very good ground, load any of those who have gotten the name of Professors, (no nor of them who have not neither.)

Repl. If he be not a *Dog*, or *Swine*, yet, if I should reprove him, he would be angry with me, and not receive the good counsel which I give him.

A. Art thou sure of that? Who told thee so? Did he himself at any time tell thee so? Where is thy Charity? or, of what kind is it? For *Paul* speaking of *true Christian Charity*, saith, that it hopeth all (good) things, and thinketh no evil, *1 Cor. 13. 5, 7.* to wit of others (without a sound and sure ground.) Take heed of proving thy self, *nothing*, ver. *1, 2, 3.* Verily if a man should tell me, he would not receive instruction; I think, I should not absolutely believe him. It may be, he might be displeased and angry with me for a while, and afterward his second thoughts might be better: (although I have known when, (I think, a Captain and a Lieutenant) have fairly endured my stout and blunt reproof in an Inn in *London*, for swearing. For I said unto them, *Gentlemen*, what are ye, who thus transgress the Laws of God and the King, by (swearing?) We know not what success we shall have. *180000* chosen Warriors of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, being assembled together, to fight against the ten Tribes; yet, when they understood, it was the Lords mind, that they should depart every man to his house, and not fight against their brethren, they hearkened to him, and (without any more ado) returned to depart according to the word of the Lord, *1 King. 12. 21, 22, 23, 24.* Also when the people of *Israel*, and the *Priests*, and the *Levites* had mingled themselves with the Heathens, &c. although the hand of the Princes and Rulers were chief in this trespass; yet *Ezra* the Priest prevailed with them to put away their strange Wives and their children born of them, *chap. 9. and 10.* and *Nehemiah* prevailed with the Nobles and the Rulers and others, to leave their Usury and Oppression, and to make restitution, *chap. 5.* Neither do we find that *Nebuchadnezzar* or *Belshazzar* were displeased with *Daniel*, when he told them, what would come upon them, *Dan. 4. and 5.* Why then should not I and others hope, that God will give us good success, when we go in the fear of God, and with an upright heart about this business? Why not, that very many will prove like *David*, who if the righteous would smite him with wounds of reproof, would receive them as a kindness, and as a precious Medicine; which would help to heal his soul; so we are to understand, *Psal. 141. 5.* My charity tells me that Professors do trespass in some sins, and particularly concerning *Ornaments of the body and other things indifferent, ignorantly*, not knowing that they be sins, or acting rashly, without due consideration, of which if they were admonished, I cannot but hope, a great part, and, it may be, some who are *thy near neighbours*, would receive instruction, and reform. Therefore pity Professors, and do the best thou canst, to awaken them, and to open their eyes, and to help the lame to walk.

230 *Apol.* But some of the offending Professors are my *Friends*, and some my *Benefactors*; I live by their *Benevolence and good will*; and for that cause I do forbear their sins.

A. Do you so? What are you? Are you a *Christian*? What is that then, which you profess? Is it *carnal self-love and self-seeking*? If it be so, then your silence doth not belie your profession. But it may be, you think, you do love them, who love you, (as the *Publicans* did (*Mat. 5. 46.*) And is this thy kindness to thy *Friends*? Why man, thou oughtest to minister *spiritual things* to them especially, who minister *carnal and worldly things* to thee: for that is one of the *Obligations* which are upon thee. Yea, Friend, if thou seest *the Ass of thine enemy*, lying under his burthen; thou oughtest (surely) to leave thy *business* to help him, and if thou meet *the Ox or Ass of thy enemy* going astray; thou oughtest (surely) to bring it back again, *Exod. 23. 4, 5.* and canst thou see *the soul* of thy Friend, who loveth thee (and thou pretendest to love him) canst thou see his soul, going astray, and not take some care and pains, to bring it back again? and see the soul of thy *Benefactor* lying under a burthen of sin, and forbear to help it? Is this true love, and true *Christianity*, not to take so much care and pains, to help *thy Friends soul* as thou oughtest to help *thy enemies Ass*? Surely, I know not, where this is true *Christian love*, unless it be beyond the *Antipodes*, or where all the people be *Heathens*. For as for *Christians*, they ought to have more respect to the souls of one another, than to the bodies. But alas, Friend, all this while, I have not remembred, that which thou and I ought in all our dealings with Professors principally and above all other things to regard, to wit, the honour and interest of *our most dear Friend Jesus Christ*, *Mat. 6. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 31.* Canst thou persuade thy self, to neglect him also, whom thou oughtest to respect above all the Creation? But very many Professors do little think, how many sins of others they be partakers of, and how much their iniquity is encreased through their sinful silence.

233 *Apol.* But Sir, will some say in *their hearts*; (I fear it is so with many, although they speak it not with their Tongues, *Psal. 14. 7.*) if I should reprove *N.* I should lose *the help of his purse*.

A. How long hast thou been a Professor, that thou hast so little Charity? For he ought to love thee the more for thy Faithfulness (*Prov. 27. 5, 6.*) and the rather to make thee one of the *Mrs. of his purse*. And why art thou so foolish and so slow, to believe what the Scripture hath spoken? Doth not the spirit of truth by *Solomon* say, *Prov. 28. 23.* that *He who rebuketh a man, shall afterwards find*

more favour, than he who flattereth with the Tongue; and Prov. 16. 7. that when a mans ways please the Lord, he maketh his enemies to be at peace with him? And, will he then suffer thy Friends, when thou dost thy duty, to do them good, to shew themselves unkind, and as no Friends to thee. Be not faithless, but believing: *trust in God*. Howsoever, the favour and loving kindness of God is better than life, Psal. 63. 3. Take heed, God look not on thee, as a man-pleaser, and none of the servants of Christ, Gal. 1. 10.

Obj. But, is it not enough, that I do frequently and earnestly pray for the Reformation of Professors?

A. That indeed is more, than most Professors do; I think so, and that they do not judge, that there is need of any great Reformation. Yet that is but part of thy duty. This thou oughtest to do, and not to omit reproof. And it may be, God hath not heard thy prayers for them, because thou dost not reprove them.

Apol. But peradventure one or two will say, they be not thoroughly reformed themselves. 234

A. Whose fault is that? Why dost thou delay to cleanse thy ways according to Gods rule? Psal. 119. 9. Neither do Christs words, Mat. 7. or any other Scripture import, that unreformed or poorly-reformed Professors be freed from the duty of exhorting and reproofing others: So that thy silence at other mens faults doth encrease thine iniquity. It is indeed better to sweep before thy own door first: but if thou be so foolish, as not to sweep there, necessity is laid upon thee, to consider and reprove other Professors, and wo may come to thee, if thou dost not.

Obj. But, if I do tell others of their faults, then (belike) they will upbraid me with mine.

A. I could wish all thy near Neighbours and acquaintance would tell thee of them: then, it may be, thou wouldst amend them, which would be far better for thee, than to suffer in Hell fire for them.

Use 2. Receive then this Admonition; reprove those Professors that are fit to be reproved: and to move thee thereunto, consider. It is the will of God and thy duty: therefore do it, 1 Thes. 5. 12. (yea, it is said, Lev. 7. 19. 17. Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him: which words do import, that we must do it (as we say) by all means, and not suffer other affairs and matters to keep us from doing it.) Thou hast authority to do it. Hath not God commanded thee? It is a debt which thou owest to such as need it; pay that thou owest, withhold not good from them to whom it is due, Rom. 13.

8. *Prov. 3. 27.* It tends to Gods honour and glory. Do it for his sake. And to the healing and good of the blind, lame, sleepey, &c. Do it also for their sakes. Do it also for thy own sake; *that thou bear not sin for thy Neighbour.* So some render the last clause, *Lev. 19. 17.* that is that thou be not punished for not rebuking him. *Keep thy self pure, be not partaker of other mens sins:* 1 Tim. 5. 22. and partaker (for certain) thou art, with him or her whom thou oughtest to reprove, either of those trespasses for which thou oughtest to reprove them, or of the trespasses in sins of the same kind which they commit after, or
- 236 of both. One thing more some have inferred from the Coherence of the words, *Lev. 19. 17.* viz. that *not to reprove is to hate:* which inference, whether it be right or not; yet, if he who spareth his rod, doth, *in the Language of the Holy Ghost,* hate his Son (as he doth; for that's the expression, *Prov. 13. 24.*) then, in the Language of the Holy Ghost, he who spareth words of reproof, when he ought to reprove, *hateth those whom he ought to reprove;* his Neighbours, Friends, Benefactors, Professors, and of what sort soever they be. And I would not that Professors should hate one another, but reprove offenders; as the LORD himself did *Sarah*, *Gen. 18. 12, 15.* the Son of God, *Martha*, *Luke 10. 41, 42.* and the Angels the Churches of *Asia*, *Rev. 2. and 3.* and the Holy Ghost doth the World, *John 16. 8, 9.* *Nathan*, *David*, *2 Sam. 12.* and *Paul* his fellow Apostle, *Peter*, *Gal. 2.* In a word, do ye desire to walk purely, and wisely? Tread then in the steps of *Paul*, and other godly persons, as they did in the steps of God and *Jesum Christ*, *1 Cor. 11. 1.* Now
- 237 that the fore-mentioned causes of our sinful silence may not be of force to destroy or weaken our holy Resolution to admonish, reprove, &c. Consider, what it is for a man *to love himself aright.*
3. Stir up in thy heart very much love of God, and much filial fear of God, and a strong Affiance in God, and much brotherly love toward Professors and the Church of God, especially in respect of their spiritual welfare. For, if these five things be really in thee and do abound, they will make thee, that thou shalt *neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesum Christ*, (*2 Pet. 1. 8.*) and particularly (whatsoever more may be said of them) they will move thee effectually, to do, what I would fain have thee to do, (to labour to reform, to reprove, &c.) and that; as thy duty, and also for the service and honour of God, and for the good of Professors and
- 238 Gods Church, and of offenders, and for thy own good. And Affiance in God will drive away Affiance in man; and the love of God and his people, will drive away carnal self-love; and the fear of God
- and

and Affiance in God will drive away carnal and worldly fears of men, of the loss of the love of men, of the anger and ill will of men, of poverty, of mens *shutting up their bowels of compassion from us* contrary to 1 John 3. 17. And what saith David? Psal. 31. 19. *O how great (saith he unto God) is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up (in store)?* Sure it is a very great measure of Happiness which he speaks of. And for whom hath God laid it up in store? Verily, for them who fear God, and for them who *trust in him before the sons of men*: that is, (not who trust in God rather, than in men, or more than in men, but) *for them who, by their carriage toward men and dealings with men, do make it appear that they do really trust in God.* Truly, Friends, it is a wretched thing for a man, to say, God is his Father, and that he trusteth in him for a mansion in Heaven, and not to *trust in* and *rely on* him for his daily bread; *as if his Father were dead.* But now let me bestow some Rules on you concerning reprovng. 1. Know, that thou art bound to deal concerning their sins, not only with the Professors with whom thou *ushest* to have fellowship in the Gospel at meetings, but with other Professors also. 2. Consider, whom to reprove, when, where, how, &c. whom first, &c. 3. Admonish and reprove with as much *heavenly wisdom* and fit humane discretion as thou canst, *begging wisdom of God, who giveth to all men liberally,* Jam. 1. 5. and 3. 17. 1 Kings 3. 5. &c. 4. As lovingly (for true Christian love) and as mildly and meekly, as thou canst, *unless there be cause to deal otherwise,* Gal. 6. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 6, 24, 25. 1 Tim. 5. 20. 1 Cor. 4. 21. Jude ver. 22, 23. Gal. 2. 11. 5. Shew all due and fit respect to the credit of offenders, &c. Mat. 18. 15, 16, 17. 1 Cor. 4. 6. 6. Having respect to the calling and age of the offenders, according to Col. 4. 17. 1 Tim. 1. 2. and to the temper and disposition of their spirits generally. 7. Consider also thy self, *thy own calling, age, &c.* For such Language did become our Saviour and Paul, as would not have been fit for some of the ordinary Pastors, Luke 24. 25, Gal. 3. 1. 8. Above all other Professors (excepting thy self) be sure, (as far forth as there is cause) to admonish and request the Ministers and Preachers, to apparel and adorn their Son's, Bodies, Sermons, and Prayers, and all their behaviour, more like men professing Godline(s), Sobriety, (Modesty) Mortification; and Humility (1 Tim. 2. 10. Tit. 2. 3, 4, 5, 8.) and to conform more fully to the Doctrine and practise of Paul (1 Cor. 2. 1. &c. 1 Cor. 14. 8, 9. 1 Thes. 2. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.) and to deal more faithfully, and more plainly, and more home, with thee and other Professors, than many of them use to do: and not to cease from admonishing, rebuking, &c. till ther-

an Universal Reformation. Nay, they who are not Preachers, have Authority to admonish Ministers, *1 Thes. 4. 8, and 5. 14. Hebr. 3. 12, 13. Col. 4. 17.* and, according to the seeing of my eyes, and my best intelligence, the *out-sides* and silence, and other sins of Ministers in London and elsewhere do require it.

9. Imitate *Abigail*, *1 Sam. 25. 36.* Reprove no man, whilst he is in his drink (I have heard of some Professors, that they have been drunk) or in a passion: for with that, some mens minds are disabled, as much as they would be with excess of drink. Yet here, query, whether a Professor ought not to bestow a few words of rebuke on his fellow-Professor who shews himself drunk, or in a passion, *in the presence and sight of profane persons*, that they may not have occasion, to say, We do indulge and bear one with another carnally; I mean, whether he ought not to do so much *forthwith*: One of the best times to reprove an offender, should be, when he hath been at some exercise of Religion, as a Fast, or hearing some wholsom instructions concerning the soul, or at prayer, especially praying apart from others: If a Professor will not immediately or soon after that receive a Reproof with a quiet spirit, I know not when he will, but shall look on it, as a very bad sign.

10. Remember, it is not, *an hundred and twenty years*, nor, *let it alone this year also*, nor, *yet forty dayes*, but *to day*, *Heb. 4. 7.* Defert not this necessary work of reprovng, &c. *without just cause*, no not for a moment. For we know not, what a day may bring forth, *Prov. 3. 28. Prov. 27. 1. Jam. 4. 14.* and many Professors have need of much help; yea some, I believe, who have *specious and large* Forms of Godliness, long prayers, (*Ecc. 5. 1, 2, 3. Mat. 6. 7, 8, 9. &c. Mat. 23. 14.*) &c. and some, who, in their speeches at times, do make a fair shew of true grace (it may be of much) of Zeal, Humiliation, Mortification, Humility, Sobriety, Modesty, tenderness of Conscience, contempt of earthly things, &c. For, that notwithstanding, a considerable part of their ornaments and behaviour (savours and smells (what if I had said stinks?) of *Pride, Vanity, Envy, foolishness, (foolish-talking, and unseemly jesting) excessive mirth and jollity, lasciviousness, love of pleasure and ease, palat-pleasing, men-pleasing*, &c. one part of their behaviour contradicting the other part, *2 Tim. 3. 5. Tit. 1. 16.* O how *piously*, religiously and holily (for the words) some will sometimes talk, who are very little or just nothing for true Christians. Like the legs of the lame, which are not equal, or a pottle in the mouth of a fool, *Prov. 26. 7.* As if a man should have *Devils or Ipy-bushes* hanged at the door of his house, and say

little or no good drink within it. What said Mr. Walter Cradock? 243
I protest (quoth he) *these women are enough to make a man an Atheist,*
 speaking of some female Professors; which he might well have spoken of some Male Professors also. 11. Whosoever doubteth concerning any matter, let him ask of them who are able to instruct him, and also conscientious, to direct him aright.

Use. 3. With all importune the Almighty alwayes, and with all thy might and skill (*Luke 18.*) to reform Professors, and to stir up Professors, (Preachers, and else) to do what they are able, both privately and publicly, when they be the mouth of God to men, or the mouth of men to God, and in all other cases, toward the reforming of Professors, especially in reproving them for their sins and trespasses, and to encrease the abilities of such as are willing, and to bless their praise-worthy enterprizes. For, as far as I see, or have been informed, and can remember, *very few Professors do pray for the Reformation of Professors under the name of Reformation*; I mean, using that term. Many use to speak, as if they should say, some Professors indeed might do well to amend some matters: but their faults be so few and so small, that the amendment of them would scarce or not at all deserve the name of a Reformation: so that it is not very material, whether they do amend or not. But I am not of this judgment.

Use. 4. Let all those Professors who are fit to be reproved (the number whereof is *very great*) either prevent the Reprovers (for, I hope, they will be many) or else prepare themselves to receive Reproofs with a calm and thankful heart, and when Reproofs come, entertain them with such a spirit. To which end, I counsel thee, who art a Professor, 1. To stir up in thy heart, a real and earnest desire, to know more of thy sins, and of the dangers and evils of them. 2. To request and entreat Professors, (Ministers and others,) to speak to thee of thy sins, and to tell thee, that they bethine, and to reprehend thee for them. Say (in thy heart) as *David*, *Psal. 141. Let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness, &c.* 3. When any man or woman reproves thee, remember, that it is his or her duty so to do. So that thou mayest very well say, as *David* said of *Shimei*, *2 Sam. 16. The Lord hath bidden him, and who shall then say unto him, wherefore hast thou done so?* *2 Sam. 16. 10, 11.* 4. Exercise thy charity in believing, that he reproves thee out of true Christian love, aiming at thy good, and the other worthy ends before specified. For this is one of the effects of charity, *1 Cor. 13. 3, 7.* 5. Remember, that it is better, to bear the rebuke of the wise, than to hear the song of Fools, *Eccl. 7. c.* that

- open rebuke is better than secret love; and that the wounds of a friend are faithful*, Prov. 27. 5, 6. (To a wise man love hidden and not manifested, is in most cases little worth.) O that there were such a spirit in all our Preachers, as was in *Micaiah*, 1 King. 22. 23. and in all Professors, as in *David*, to take reproofs, as he did, *Psal.* 141. 1 *Sam.* 25. 32, 33. Then our Preachers would be far more frequent and bold in reproving, than now they be, and speak plainly, not suffering Professors to *proclaim themselves Gods enemies, by going on still in their trespasses*, *Psal.* 68. 21. and Professors would take a reproof, as a kindness; and for it love the Reprover; which would be a sign of grace in the persons reprov'd, and would be followed with a happy amendment of such Professors wayes. Yea, if Professors do request their fellow-Professors, to mind them of their faults, and *really resolve* to take a reproof, as a kindness; then, if some of their fellows and friends shall *neglect them*, it may be, God will do them much good by the *upbraiding, harsh and bitter words of an enemy*. For he can bring good out of evil. Howsoever, a great Reformation would follow; and that (with humility) would (in due time) bring a great exaltation & much prosperity, 1 *Pet.* 5. 6.
- 247 *Obj.* But what said one unto me lately? What (said he) if other Ministers will not become Reprovers?

Ans. What if *Lot* were living again in *Sodom*? yet he would be righteous and say, *I pray you brethren, do not so wickedly*, *Gen.* 19. 7. What if the *Israelites* would serve false Gods? yet *Josuah* and his house would serve *JEHOVAH*, *Jos.* 24. 15. What if all flesh hath corrupted his wayes upon the earth? yet *Noah* will be a just and perfect man, and a Preacher of Righteousness, and walk with God, *Gen.* 6. 9, 12. What if a Priest doth only see the man who is wounded and left half dead, and a Levite doth only look on him somewhat more than the Priest, but neither of them go unto him and seek to heal his wounds: yet be thou like the *Samaritan*, who went unto him, and bound up his wounds, poured in oyle and wine, &c.

248 *Luke* 10. 30. &c. Be thou, I say, like the *Samaritan*: shew thy self a true neighbour to those Professors, whom *Satan* hath wounded, and who have wounded themselves; have compassion on them, and shew mercy to them. If others will not do their duty; yet do thou thine, and do it thoroughly: and God will bless thee. Take courage, I say, and do (thy duty) and the Lord shall be with thee good, 2 *Chron.* 19. 11.

Deo gratias, July 26. 1667.

The CONTENTS.

THe Exordium. To margin 2.

This being a time of some evils, we are to consider, marg. 2.

Point 1. *What the evils of it be, marg. 3. to 6.*

[A profitable Digression, marg. 7.]

P. 2. *That none of them came upon us without God. For he is Almighty, and present in all places, and knoweth all things, and all our times are in his hands, &c. marg. 11. to 15.*

P. 3. *That, in afflicting us, he hath done us no wrong, but punished us less than our iniquities deserve. For we were born altogether flesh, and all our graces are imperfect, and our best works mingled with corruptions, dwelling in us. We do all offend in many things, marg. 16, 17. and the least of our sins deserves Hell, marg. 30, 31.*

P. 4. *That God hath afflicted us in wisdom, and for good and fit ends, marg. 18.*

P. 5. *Why, and for what ends he hath afflicted us, marg 18. &c.*

a. *For what ends he afflicts men, marg. 19. to 25,*

b. *For what ends he afflicts Professors, &c. marg. 25. to 29.*

c. *That the most prevalent cause of our afflictions, and the strongest impediment of our petitions against them, is our sins, marg. 26, 30. to 34. and one of his ends in afflicting us, to humble and reform us, marg. 28, 94, 124.*

l. *What manner of Judge God is, &c. marg.*

ll. *The method and severity which he useth in afflicting men, marg. 36. to 54, 80.*

lll. *What sort of persons, it is most probable, he will punish in this world, and where begin judgment, marg. 41. to 46.*

Reasons why we should impute our afflictions to our sins.

A. *Our iniquity is great, Psa'. 25. 11.*

1. *Before t^{he} Law, under the Law, and in the primitive times of the Gospel, Gods Covenant-servants, and even godly persons did trespass, not only in little sins, but also in gross sins, marg. 33. to 36, 126.*

2. *Our spiritual enemies are as dangerous now, or more dangerous, than of old time, marg. 35, 36, 126.*

3. *This is part of S. Pauls perillous times of Formalists, marg. 36.*

The Contents.

1. *It is probable, that Churches of all sorts have corrupt members in them, and some godly persons have committed gross sins in our days, marg. 32. to 35.*
2. *A foretelling concerning some Churches, marg. 85, 86.*
3. *Many of us are but Formalists; whose behaviour cannot but be full of iniquity, marg. (58, 96, 97,) 125. to 128.*
4. *Five very considerable sins of Professors, Ministers, and not Ministers, m. 80.*
5. *Seven dangerous sins of Professors, Ministers, and not Ministers, m. 84 to 87.*
6. *Sins relating to the Gospel, m. 79.*
7. *Want of brotherly love and unity, &c. marg.*
8. *Excessive drinking, marg. 240.*
9. *Partaking of one anothers sins; a very dangerous consent between Professors, marg. 78, 79, 84.*
10. *Some of our sins are greater than many of us take them to be, marg. 35, 53.*
11. *How our sins be aggravated, marg. 59. to 79.*
12. *Every sin is great, and deserves Hell, marg. 17, 30, 31.*
13. *Our tempting of God, marg. 146, 147, 148.*
- [An Exhortation, marg. 149.]
14. *Sins which many make light account of, for which God may see cause to punish us, marg. 47. to 54, 80.*
15. *Some of us have not yet learned, how great a hand they have had in pulling down this wrath, marg. 47. to 54, 56.*
16. *To take heed they be not deceived, marg. 18, 19, 26.*
17. *Down-right reasons, to impute our afflictions to our own sins, marg. 81. to 89. [marg. 101, 103, 104, 110, 138, 163, 164.]*
18. *More of our sins, marg. 3, 28. to 36, 50. to 87, 90. to 103, 108, 114, 120. to 122, 197. to 201, 204, 210. to 213, 210. to 236, 240. to 243.*
19. *What we have done, to better our estates, or to obtain of God, to better them, marg. 90, 91.*
20. *What success we have had, marg. 92.*
21. *Why God hath not heard our prayers to the full: which is, because he hath not attained all his ends, marg. 93. See marg. 25. to 29.*
22. *What it concerns us to do now, that our prayers be no longer hindered, marg. 94. to 113, 124.*
23. *Large and specious forms of godliness will not serve our turn, &c. marg. 94, 95, 96.*
24. *The iniquity and defects of our prayers, marg. 96, 97. Of our Fasts, marg. 96, 98. Of our forms of godliness generally, marg. 99. to 103.*
25. *The unprofitableness of prayer without Reformation, marg. 162.*
26. *When God will hear our prayers, and put an end to our sufferings, marg. 137. to 144.*
27. *As concerns us, to do, as is prescribed, marg. 104. to 124. 139. to 137.*

The Contents.

- a. To take notice of our ignorance of some sins, marg. 213.) and to seek knowledge as silver, Prov. 2, 1. to 5.)
- b. To find out every one of us his own sins, marg. 203. How to find them out, marg. 103. to 108, 203. to 206.
- c. To amend, every one of us, his own wayes and conversation universally, even without any exception or reservation of any sin or duty, marg. 28, 79, 135, 136, 140. to 143, 191, 193, 194, 203.
- d. Pleading and reasoning for this, marg. 138, 144. to 154.
- e. Of a great Reformation, as a fore-runner of a great exaltation, marg. 54, 129, 130.
- f. Arguments against the necessity of a further Reformation, answered, marg. 165. to 176.
- g. Such as shall not reform, threatened, marg. 135, 136, 137, 155. to 163. An Exhortation to such as need it, marg. 162.
- h. What they ought to do, who know, or think, or fear, they be but Formalists, marg. 104. to 124, 129. to 137.
- i. Other directions for all Professors, marg. 109. to 113.
- k. Of pride and humility, &c. marg. 176. to 187.
- l. All Professors, to pray unto God for the reformation of Professors, &c. and to do whatsoever they can toward it, marg. 243, 190. to 195.
- m. Ministers to do so, and directions for them, marg. 100, 195. to 217. Faults which they ought to avoid, viz. Ignorance, affectation of fine words, and hunting after them, &c. marg. 197. to 201, 213, 240.
- n. They who are not Ministers, to do likewise, marg. 190. to 195. Directions for such, marg. 202. to 217.
- o. Of those who are of great power with God, marg. 188, 189, 190.
1. Part of the doctrine of Reproving, &c. with the use of it, marg. 218. to 248.
2. Reproving and admonishing to be the duty of those who are not Ministers, marg. 224.
3. Apologies and excuses for not reprovng, answered, marg. 224. to 234, 247, 248.
4. Rules concerning reprovng, marg. 239. to 242. I beseech you all, consider very seriously, marg. 163.

Books to be sold by Thomas Parkhurst, at the Golden Bible on London-Bridge.

MR. Sedgwick's Bowels of Mercy. fol.
Jho. Taylor's Works, the first vol. fol.

2. An Exposition of Temptation, on *Matth. 4. verse 1.* to the end of the eleventh.

3. A Commentary on *Titus*.

4. *David's Learning*: A Comment upon *Psal. 32*.

5. The Parable of the Sower, and of the Seed, upon *Luke 8. and 4.*
Divine Characters in two parts, distinguishing the Hypocrite in his best dress, by *Sam Crook, B.D.*

A Learned Commentary or Exposition on the first Chapter of the second Epistle to the *Corinthians*, by *Richard Sibbs, D.D. fol.*

A Commentary on the whole Epistle of *St. Paul* to the *Ephesians*, by *Mr. Paul Bain, fol.*

A practical Exposition on the third Chapter of the first Epistle of *St. Paul* to the *Corinthians*, with the *Godly Mans Choice*, on *Psal. 4. ver. 6, 7, 8.* By *Anthony Burgess, fol.*

The dead Saint, speaking to Saints and sinners living, in several Treatises. The first on *2 Sam. 24. 10.* The second on *Cant. 4. 9.* The third on *John 1. 50.* The fourth on *Isa. 58. 2.* The fifth on *Exod. 15. 11.* By *Samuel Bolton, D.D. fol.*

Colloquia Mensalia, or *Dr. Martin Luthers Divine Discourses* at his Table with *Melancthon*, and several others. Translated by *Henry Bell, fol.*

The view of the Holy Scriptures. By *Hugh Broughton, fol.*

Christianographia, or a Description of the multitude, and sundry sorts of Christians in the world, not subject to the *Pope*. By *Eph. Pagitt, fol.*

These six Treatises following, are written by Mr. George Swinnock.

1. The *Christian Mans Calling*; or a Treatise of making Religion one's business, in *Religious Duties, Natural Actions, his Particular Vocation, his Family Directions*, and his own Recreation; to be read in Families for their Instruction and Edification. The first Part.

2. Likewise a second Part; wherein Christians are directed to perform their Duties, as *Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants*, in the conditions of *Prosperity and Adversity*.

3. The third and last part of the *Christian Mans Calling*, Wherein the Christian is directed how to make Religion his business, in his dealings

ings with all Men, in the Choice of his Companions, in his carriage in good Company, in bad Company, in solitariness, or when he is alone, on a Week-day from morning to night, in visiting the sick on a Dying-bed; as also the means how a Christian may do this, and some motives to it.

4. *The Door of Salvation opened, by the Key of Regeneration.*

5. *Heaven and Hell Epitomized: and the True Christian Characteriz'd.*

6. *The Fading of the Flesh, and the flourishing of Faith: Or, One cast for Eternity, with the only way to throw it well; all these by George Swinnoek M. A. Large Octavo's.*

A learned Commentary on the fourth Chapter of the second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, to which is added, First, A Conference between Christ and Mary. Second, the Spiritual Mans Aim. Third, Emanuel, or Miracle of Miracles, by Richard Sibbs, D. D. 4to.

An Exposition of the five first Chapters of Ezekiel, with useful observations thereupon, by Will. Greenhil, 4to.

The Gospel-Covenant, or the Covenant of Grace opened: Preached in New-England, by Peter Bulkeley, 4to.

Gods Holy Mind touching Matters Moral; which himself uttered in ten words, or ten Commandments; Also an Exposition on the Lords Prayer, by Edward Elton, B. D. 4to.

A plain and familiar Exposition of the ten Commandments, by John Dol, 4to.

Fiery Jesuite, or an Historical Collection of the Rise, Increase, Doctrines, and Deeds of the Jesuites. Exposed to view for the sake of London, 4to.

Horologographia Optica; Dialing Universal and Particular, Speculative and Practical; together with the Description of the Court of Arts, by a new Method, by Sylvanus Morgan, 4to.

Praxis Medicina, or the Physicians Practice, wherein are contained all inward diseases from the head to the foot, by Walter Bruel.

Regimen Sanitatis Salerni, or the School of Salerns Regiment of Health, containing Directions and Instructions for the guide and government of Mans Life, 4to.

Christ and the Covenant, the work and way of Meditation; Delivered in ten Sermons, Large Octavo's. By Will. Bridge, late of great Yarmouth.

Heart-treasure: or a Treatise tending to fill and furnish the head and heart of every Christian, with soul-enriching treasure of truths, graces, experiences and comforts, to help him in Meditation, Conference, Religious Performances, Spiritual Actions, Enduring Afflictions, and to fit him for all conditions, that he may live Holily, dye Happily, and go to Heaven

Triumphantly, by O. H. with an Epistle prefixed, by John Chester,
Large Octavo.

A Glimpse of Eternity, by A. Caley.

A Practical Discourse of Prayer, wherein is handled the Nature and Duty of Prayer, by Tho. Cobbet.

Of *Quenching the Spirit*, the evil of it in respect both of its causes and effects, discovered, by Theophilus Polwheile.

Wells of Salvation opened, or Words whereby we may be saved: with advice to Young Men: by Tho. Vincent.

The sure way to Salvation: or a Treatise of the Saints Mytical Union with Christ; wherein that great Mystery and Priviledge is opened in the nature, properties and the necessity of it by R. Stedman, M.A.

The greatest loss, upon *Matth. 16. 26.* By James Livesey, *small Octavo's.* Moses unveiled, by Williams Guild.

The Protestants Triumph, being an exact answer to all the sophistical Arguments of Papists: By Ch. Drelincourt.

A Defence against the fear of Death, By Z. Crofton.

Gods Sovereignty displayed. By William Geering.

A sober Discourse concerning the Interest of words in Prayer.

The *Godly Mans Ark*: or City of refuge in the day of his distress, in five Sermons; with Mistress Moores Evidences for Heaven. By Ed. Calamy.

The *Almost Christian Discovered*; or the false Professor tryed and cast. By Mr. Mead.

Spiritual Wisdom improved against temptation, by Mr. Mead.

A Divine Cordial.

A word of comfort for the Church of God.

A Plea for Alms, in a Sermon at the Spittle.

The *Godly Mans Picture*, drawn with a Scripture-pencil. These four last were written by Tho. Watson.

The Doctrine of Repentance useful for these times, with two Sermons against Popery, by Thomas Watson.

The *True bounds of Christian freedom*; or a Discourse shewing the extents and restraints of Chrillian liberty, wherein the truth is settled, many errors confuted; out of *John 8. ver. 36.*

A Treatise of the Sacrament, shewing a Christians Priviledge in approaching to God in Ordinances, duty in his Sacramental approaches, danger if he do not sanctifie God in them; both by Sam. Bolton, D. D.

The Lords Day enlivened, or a Treatise of the Sabbath, by Philip Goodwin.

The sinfulness of Sin, and the Fulness of Christ, two Sermons; by W. Bridges.

A serious Exhortation to a Holy Life, by Tho. Wadsworth.